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JULY 1992

VIDEO

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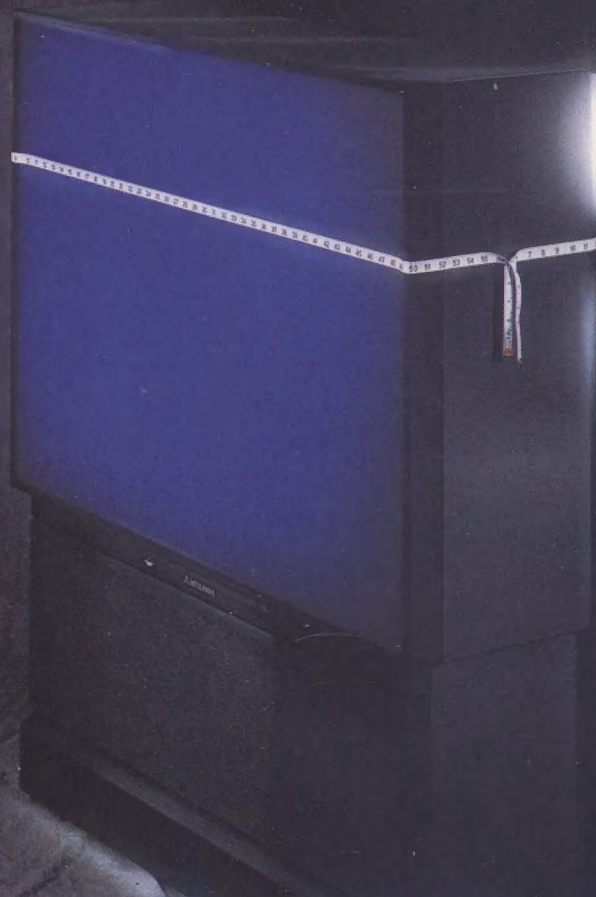
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This Hand-Cranked silent film camera, the 1903 H. Ernemann developed in Dresden, Germany, was one of the earliest successful motion picture cameras.



The Anamorphic Lens achieved the first large-format screen image. Originally developed in the late 1920's, it helped entice thousands of people back into the theaters during a sagging film economy three decades later.

Every so often the technology of movie

Buy the new Mitsubishi HS-CX7u Camcorder and you'll be buying more than just a camera. You'll be getting a little bit of history, too. Because ours is the first video camera in the world with One-Touch Event Settings, which automatically control all critical camera adjustments.

Let's say, for example, you want to use your camera on the big ski trip. You can remind yourself to adjust the iris, check the shutter

speed, and take a guess at how to set the white balance. Or, using the new HS-CX7u, you can simply select the "skier" icon. And six separate functions will be automatically adjusted to shoot in the snow.

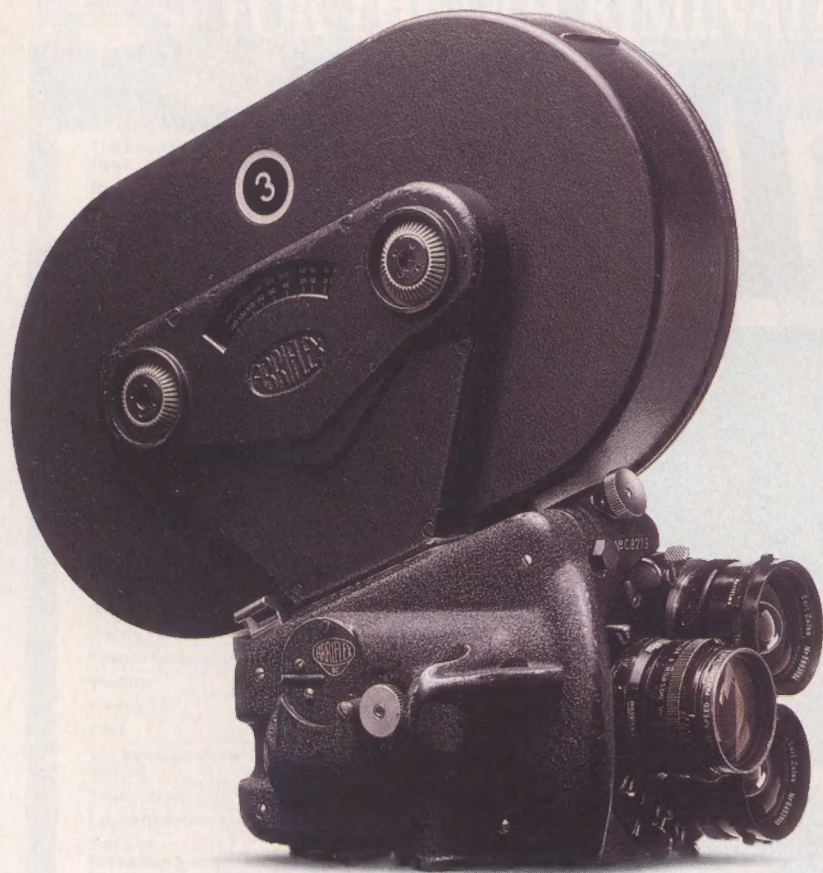
Or maybe you're shooting indoors at your neighbors' 60's Retro party. No problem. Just select the "party" icon. And the camera programs itself to handle the lighting conditions you find at a party.

There are six icons in all, which

will cover just about any shooting situation you might encounter.

The HS-CX7u also comes equipped with our Stable Cam™ feature. This sophisticated image stabilization system automatically compensates for any shakiness in your hands while shooting. Which means your pictures won't come out looking like you shot an earthquake. Unless, of course, you shot an earthquake.

What's more, the HS-CX7u



The Arriflex Camera, like the 1950's 35-2C pictured here, was the first camera to use a "spinning mirror reflex shutter," making it possible for the camera operator to see through the camera while filming.



The "skier" icon represents the brightness event setting, one of six single-touch automatic settings, on the new Mitsubishi HS-CX7u Camcorder.

making takes a giant leap forward.

was designed with a lightweight inner lens focusing system. So it uses less battery power, while focusing faster than heavier external lens systems. In fact, the whole camera weighs a mere 1.4 pounds.

Our "Quick Recording" feature allows you to go from "stop" to "play" in less than one-third of a second,



so you're guaranteed not to miss any of the action. A welcome benefit when your daughter picks one exact instant to take her very first steps on earth.

And to make sure you catch all those editorial comments your Uncle Fred is so fond of making, our Hi-Fi recording and reproduction

capabilities allow you to pick up high-quality sound from any direction.

Now that you know the HS-CX7u is one of the most sophisticated pieces of movie making equipment in the world, you might want to head over to your nearest Mitsubishi dealer and take a look.

After all, something this huge doesn't come along very often.



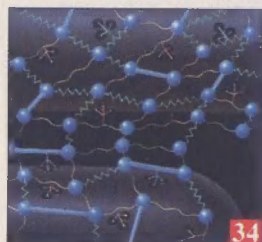
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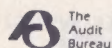
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Cover:
Mitsubishi's skinny 50-inch VS5017S shows how innovative product designers are changing the shape of today's televisions. Photo by Jay Brenner

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Number 4



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HOW TO BUY

RECEIVER OR PROCESSOR?

A/V receivers and surround sound processors are both central components in a home theater system, but do you really need both? And, if not, which would serve you better?

Many manufacturers produce both types of components. Luxman, for example, makes both the RV-371 A/V surround sound FM/AM receiver and the F-116 Dolby Pro Logic surround sound processor.

The RV-371 is Luxman's top-of-the-line receiver and features 3 Pro Logic and 4 simulated surround sound modes as well as a CD synchro function and 20 station presets. This model pumps 70 watts to each of the front channels, 55 watts to the center channel and 50 watts to the rear channels.

Like the RV-371, the F-116 also has Dolby Pro Logic capabilities, but does not have an amplifier or the AM/

FM tuning abilities of the receiver. It also lacks the CD synchro function. It does, however, have three decoder programs, in-

cluding Pro Logic, Mono Logic and Music, and an Auto-Azimuth™ correction technique, which makes adjustments for balance and other playback errors.

They are both high-end sound devices, but which is best for you? A surround sound processor is an ideal addition to any pre-existing sound system that lacks sufficient processing power options and true home theater ambience. A receiver is good for those who need AM/FM tuning and sound processing capabilities combined in one multi-purpose unit.

See your local PARA dealer for more information on these products. For more information on Luxman's units, call 1-800-421-2284, ext. 307.

PARA is an association of specialty audio/video retailers. To locate a PARA dealer near you, call:

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CHANNEL ONE

Video passages

Among the many home video-related stories reported in the general media this spring, a few items deserve special attention.

In April, a brief note in *The New York Times* confirmed the closing of *Video Review* magazine, our competitor for more than a decade. We read the notice with mixed feelings. Indeed, we had heard the news several days earlier and while we're not happy to see any publication shut its doors, we're doubly proud of our continued service to video enthusiasts.

Those of you who subscribe to this publication certainly know how vibrant the home video marketplace is, and if you have picked us up at a newsstand for the first time, you will see in these pages a continuous flow of new and improved equipment and programs created explicitly to enhance the home video experience.

If you are a former *Video Review* reader, welcome to *Video Magazine*. We've been chronicling the video revolution since its inception a decade and a half ago, and attribute our continued success in large part to keeping our finger on the pulse of this most dynamic of markets. If you'd like to suggest areas for expanded coverage, we'd love to hear from you.

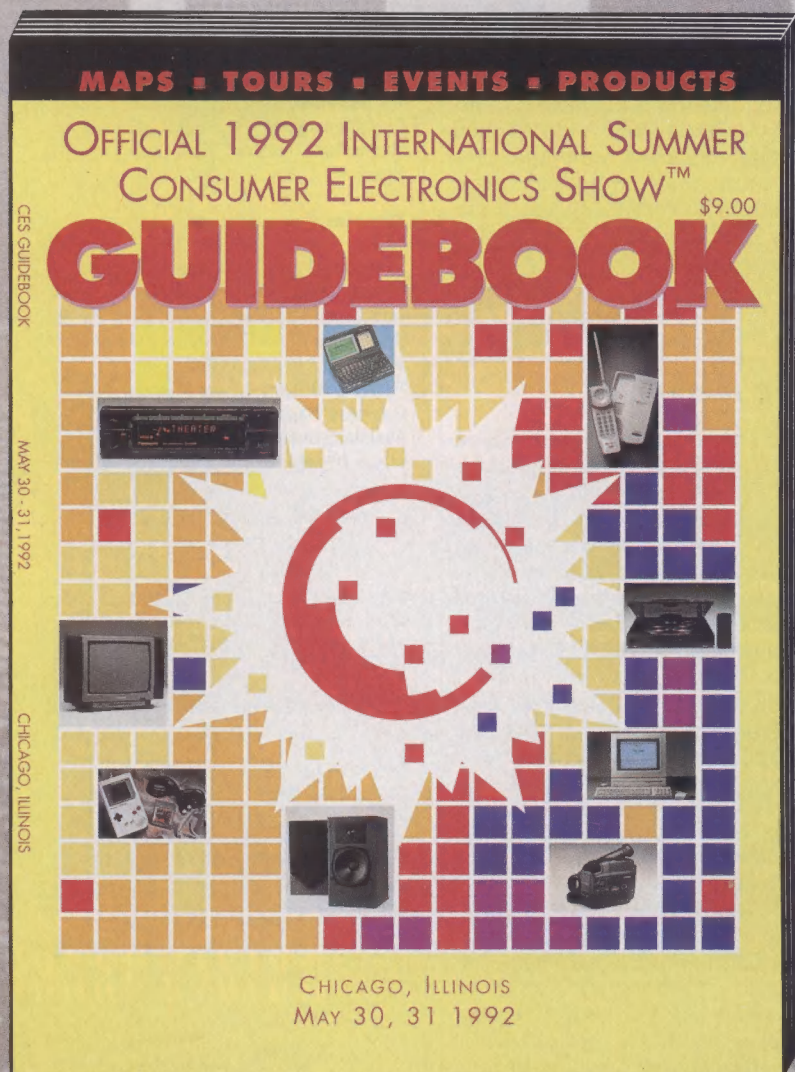
A passing of a different nature was also noted by the *Times* in April, that of Charles P. Ginsburg, an engineer who played a key role in the development of video technology. In the early 1950s, while employed at Ampex, Ginsburg headed a six-member research team given the mandate to create a video recorder able to preserve television images. In 1956, Ampex introduced the world's first practical video recorder and the tape to go with it.

It could have been (and eventually would have been) someone else, but Ginsburg's team got there first. Without his effort and that of his team, the home video revolution, which is a natural extension of that seminal work, would not be here, and the world would be a much different place.

Finally, we'll add a word to the millions already written on the most significant news event involving home video—the Rodney King verdict and subsequent unrest. From where we sit, only two elements of the entire affair are entirely clear. One is the increasing pervasiveness of camcorders in American society—almost anything can and will be captured on tape. Second, notwithstanding the profound impact of home video, human nature doesn't change. While viewing events in person, or on tape, people often see and hear what they want to see and hear.

James M. Barry
Editor

**For the first time ever,
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FEEDBACK

Hell hath no fury...

In the May issue's "Q&A" column, Roderick Woodcock suggests that Stephen Lerner of Salt Lake City should switch from ED Beta to S-VHS. Who do you think you are? You should be helping him with this format—not trying to scare him away from it. For you to advise Lerner to abandon a superior format is like telling General Schwarzkopf to abandon President Bush and side with Saddam Hussein!

Michael Folkman
Orlando, Florida

Your editorial posture on the selection of an HDTV system is that quality should be the final consideration, not retro-compatibility. Why then are you so firmly committed to the demise of ED Beta in the face of its inherent superiority over the aggressively marketed S-VHS format? The timeshifter segment of the videophile market requires VCRs that sacrifice as little quality as possible from the received signal. Please clear the air and stop kowtowing to the prevailing winds of the industry.

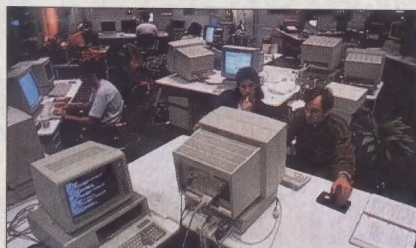
Dean Schaffer
Katonah, New York

Editor's reply: We are not committed to the demise of ED Beta. If anyone feels that the picture quality of ED Beta is worth the effort and cost involved in tracking down tape, we applaud them. For most people, S-VHS is simply more convenient.

Wanted: better picture

I mainly watch letterboxed movies, and I have surround equipment that is top-of-the-line. Yet, with all the innovations in audio, like home THX, we are still missing out on picture quality. New front-projection systems claim up to 900 lines of resolution, but we are still watching laserdiscs with only about 400 lines on NTSC systems. We can decorate home theaters or even build our own Roxys, but the picture needs to be closer to film quality before we video and cinema addicts can feel more comfortable with our expensive equipment.

Gabriel Bazarro
Tucson, Arizona



Future Lab: MIT's Media Lab, where television's future includes pay-per-view copy protection.

That's entertainment

I enjoyed your article about the MIT Media Lab ("TV Alchemists," May '92) and noted, in particular, its invention of a new way to prevent viewers from copying pay-per-view broadcasts. Thus, the Media Lab joins the distinguished company of Macrovision and VideoCipher. America may not have done much recently to bring new forms of electronic entertainment to the world, but we're definitely Number One in preventing them. Way to go, USA!

Norm Strong
Seattle, Washington

Fading memories

Since 1987 I've used premium blank tapes to record extensively home movies and news events I felt would be historical to pass to my daughter. I thought tape technology had come a long way, but when I found out the maximum life span of tapes is 15 years I was devastated (see "Videotape's Wonder Years," Oct. '91). I felt deceived by the VHS marketing claims. Nothing lasts forever, but I felt these tapes would last another generation. The lifetime warranty on the back of tapes is a real deception.

Richard Carde
Presque Isle, Maine

Editor's reply: The story states, "Sony predicts both metal and oxide tapes will last 15 years without significant decay." Granted, this is under ideal conditions, but 15 years is seen as a minimum, not a maximum. ■

Video Magazine welcomes your comments. Address correspondence to Feedback, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.

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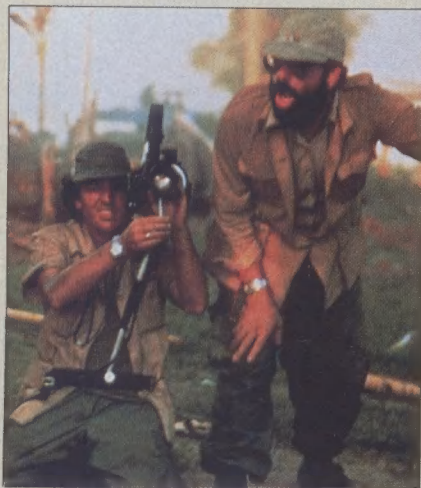
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GAZETTE

Coppola's jungle fever

Platoon, *Full Metal Jacket*, *Casualties of War* and every other movie about our experiences in Vietnam owe a huge debt to the first and best film of the genre, Francis Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. Even so, Coppola's magnum opus is probably more well-known for its many production problems than its content.

The behind-the-scenes drama included a decision to fire the film's original lead actor, Harvey Keitel, nearly a month into production; a heart attack suffered by his replacement, Martin Sheen, soon after production resumed; a typhoon that destroyed many of the location sets in the Philippines; and a Communist insurgency in that country that not only made movie-making difficult, but led to the recall of the military



The Hot Seat: Francis Coppola (right) on the set.

helicopters Coppola had rented from president Ferdinand Marcos for the film's brilliant action scenes.

The true story behind the making of the film, warts and all, can now be seen in *Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse* (Paramount). A full-length documentary that relies heavily on 16mm footage shot on the *Apocalypse* set by Coppola's wife, Eleanor, as well as new interviews with many of the film's principals, *Hearts* is most memorable for its intimate portrait of the director and



Missing in Action: *Apocalypse Now* (above) stopped cold when rented helicopters were needed for a real war.

the roller-coaster ride of his creative process. To that end, Eleanor Coppola allowed *Hearts'* directors, Fax Bahr and George Hickenlooper, to incorporate audio tapes of private conversations from the period between she and her husband.

"A lot of people think I had a bug under the table," says Eleanor Coppola of these revealing moments, which show Francis confronting his deepest fears of failure. "But I really didn't have any equipment like that. It's just that Francis got to a point where he really couldn't have cared less if a tape recorder was on—he was just too preoccupied with his film." And why did Francis allow the use of this often unflattering material in the documentary? "In the end, he couldn't let his vanity outweigh his commitment to letting the filmmakers say what they wanted to say."

Eleanor Coppola went through her own process of self-discovery while shooting the footage that would anchor

Hearts of Darkness; her only previous experience was with making very short art films in college. "The cameras arrived on my front porch one day, and I literally sat down, read all the instruction manuals and tried to learn how to use them. I made all the classic mistakes: The lens cap was left on, the camera slipped off the tripod, everything." Her original plan was just to shoot enough footage for a five-minute promo film for United Artists, but she ended up with 60 hours of film and 40 hours of audio.

Despite the personal and professional traumas of working on her own film and living with her husband as he made his, all the while deep in a heat-soaked jungle for nearly a year, Eleanor Coppola wouldn't hesitate to do it all over again. "We were stretched by the experience," she explains. "I'd never been so miserable and angry and exhausted, but I'd also never been so exhilarated and awed. It wasn't a comfortable process—but I treasure the experience." —KK

Just one of those Things

Magician Christopher Hart had never appeared in a feature film when he heard about a most unusual casting call: Director Barry Sonnenfeld and producer Scott Rudin needed a hand with their upcoming big-screen adaptation of *The Addams Family* (Paramount). A hand—quite literally—was required to play Thing, the disembodied valet to cartoonist Charles Addams' fictional but charmingly macabre clan. Hart believed the part would fit him like a glove.

"The filmmakers knew the hand needed a lot of personality to come alive on film," Hart says. "It must have been an interesting question: Where am I going to find a hand? And who uses their hands like that?"

Hart had to compete with mimes and puppeteers for the role, but his highly expressive digits set him apart. "I got called back after my first audition because they wanted to see me do specific emotions—happiness, trepidation, how a hand looks waking up in the morning. So I borrowed a camcorder and taped myself for hours, running on the floor in different ways, skidding around corners. I watched a lot of cartoons to make my hand look really animated."

The movie's script called for Thing to be truly mobile—he was no longer confined to a box as in the old *Addams Family* TV series. Patience and stamina thus proved as vital as dexterity with Sonnenfeld and company executing one difficult special-effects shot after another. It wasn't the most comfortable debut an actor could make, but it was a memorable one for Hart. "The hardest scene—apart from when Raul Julia stepped on my finger—was the one where Thing runs across an intersection to get help. I was strapped to a dolly with my arm extended off to the side while someone pushed me across the street. It was a close-up so I couldn't wear pads on my fingertips, but I had to give it weight and really run or it looked like Thing was just floating down the street. But your hand can only run on asphalt so many times—my fingers really took a beating." —KK

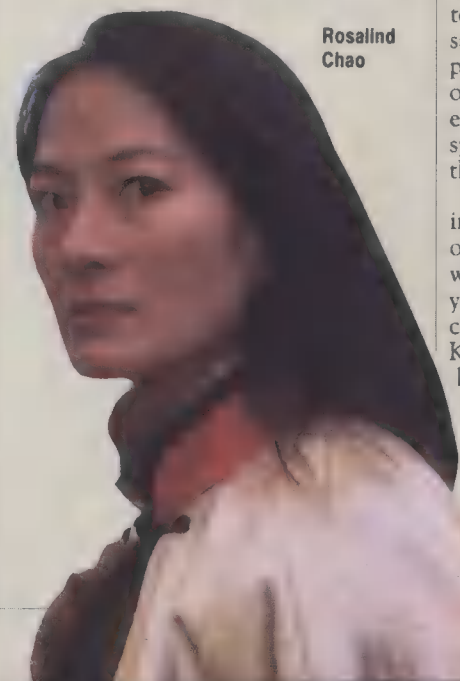


Wagon Train: Thing (Christopher Hart) lends a hand after the Addams family is evicted from its mansion.

One actress's 'Gold' mine

Thousand Pieces of Gold (Hemdale) is a sweeping epic, documenting a Chinese woman's hardships during the American gold rush. Well, it's actually an old-fashioned love story. No, wait: It's a social commentary on interracial relationships and prejudice. It's a "chick" movie.

"It's like an ink blot," the film's star,



Rosalind Chao

Rosalind Chao, told *Video Magazine*. "Its draw is that it can appeal to so many different types...It was marketed as an art film, so people tended to label it. They would say, 'Isn't it like *Ju Dou*?' just because it had an Asian face in it. Other people would say, 'It's such a women's movie.' It really is schizophrenic."

Based on the life of a true pioneer, *Thousand Pieces of Gold* profiles Lulu Nathoy, a much-loved legend of the Northwest. Sold to a marriage broker in China, Lulu is carted to an Idaho mining town, the property of a greedy Chinese saloonkeeper. She vehemently refuses to prostitute herself for him, opting to work off her "price" through hard labor, and eventually earns her freedom, the respect of the townspeople and the love of the saloon's co-owner.

While the story can be pigeonholed into different genres, each is driven by one element—the lead character. "As a woman, it's very hard to get a role where you're not the appendage to some male character," said Chao, best known as Klinger's wife on *M*A*S*H* and as a botanist on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. "And I was very intrigued by her...the fact that she really did exist. She had everything going against her, but it was her spirit—that was what endeared an entire town to her, what made them love her. And she's still loved today."

—April P. Bernard

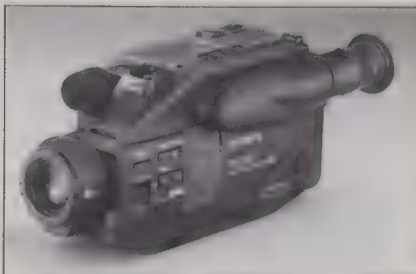
GAZETTE Flashes

IN JUNE, WE REPORTED on the heated race among five high-definition TV systems to be declared the nation's HDTV standard. Now, four of the race's major contenders have agreed to share both the benefits and the risks of pursuing the prize. The companies—Zenith, AT&T, General Instrument and MIT—developed three of the four all-digital HDTV systems being considered by the Federal Communications Commission. Should any of their systems win, the companies plan to work together to perfect it.

IT LOOKS LIKE GEMSTAR'S VCR Plus may soon become as ubiquitous on VCRs as onscreen programming and remote control. At last count, seven manufacturers had added VCR Plus to their new decks. The major holdouts are Panasonic, which instead offers its easy-to-use LCD Program Director, and Mitsubishi, which is adding a simple, one-button programming system to decks like the new S-VHS HS-U67.

LASERDISC HAS BEEN CREEPING into the public consciousness for years,

but the growing popularity of karaoke may finally give LD its big break. According to Isaac Levy, Sanyo/Fisher vice president of marketing, laserdisc remains an enthusiast product with limited appeal for the general public. But thanks to karaoke's exposure in bars and nightclubs, customers are clamoring for it. In fact, Sanyo recently began selling a modestly priced karaoke player, even though it has yet to offer a conventional laserdisc player.



Point-and-Shoot Pinnacle: Fisher's FVC10 uses programmed shooting modes in place of manual controls.

NOT CONTENT TO JUMP ON THE laserdisc karaoke bandwagon, JVC has introduced a line of CD+G karaoke players. The graphics are limited—in most cases, just lyrics—but, according to JVC, a karaoke CD+G disc costs about a third as much as a karaoke laserdisc.

THE TREND TOWARD USER-friendly camcorders with programmed exposure modes reaches a new level with Fisher's FVC10, which has almost no manual camera controls. The \$800 8mm camcorder relies on fuzzy logic autofocus, auto iris and auto white balance, plus six special shooting modes.

NOTICING THE LACK OF NEW high-end editing VCRs this season, we asked several manufacturers for an explanation. It turns out that most new Japanese-market high-end decks incorporate direct-broadcast satellite tuners or HDTV circuitry. Currently, neither feature would do U.S. consumers much good, so some manufacturers are delaying the introduction of new high-end VCRs until DBS and HDTV take hold in the U.S.

A SOURCE AT SAMSUNG, WHICH is aggressively shedding its image as a maker of low-end components, tells us the company is preparing a unique new product—a dual-well VCR in which one tape well handles VHS cassettes, while the other uses 8mm. The target date for introducing it is either late this year or early next year.

MAKING A GREAT VIDEO INCLUDES QUALITY SOUND TOO!

After using your camcorder the first time, you realize that the built-in microphone picks up sounds from all directions, including those you

don't want. And, when shooting from a distance, you can't hear your subject's voice clearly. Azden, the leader in quality audio for video, offers a full line of microphones to make your sound as good as your pictures.



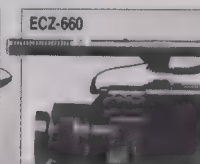
This powerful professional miniature VHF wireless system has a range of over 300 feet. It allows you to shoot from a distance and pick up your subject's voice clearly. It has 2 switchable frequencies, and it comes with 2 mics (handheld and clip-on). The transmitter clips to the subject's belt, and the mini receiver can attach to the camera (shoe mount & velcro included) or be kept in your breast pocket.



A professional VHF handheld microphone system with no wires. All the same features, and receiver as the WMS-PRO.



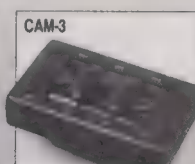
Headset with boom mic for adding narration as you shoot. Your voice becomes the dominant sound recorded. Or, use it to monitor sound you're recording.



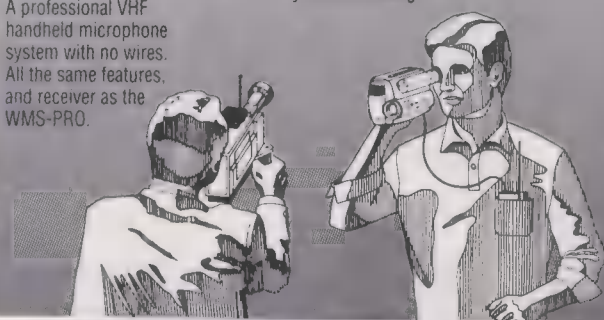
Full-size directional mic. Allows you to zoom in on subject's voice, reducing side noises. Range 35-40 feet.



Mini directional mic for palm-sized camcorders. Slide switch for adjusting width of sound pick-up pattern. Low cut filter.



A mini 3 channel mixer for recording sound from 2 add-on mics and a personal stereo, while you're shooting. Only 2 1/8 x 3 1/4" it can be attached to your camera or clipped to the handstrap. Cables included, needs no batteries.



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VIDEOTESTS



Simplified Sony: The SLV-696 includes VCR Plus circuitry, which allows a user to program the VCR by punching in code numbers from TV listings.

VIDEOTEST
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SONY

VHS VCR

Like many other VCR manufacturers, Sony has added Gemstar's VCR Plus programming circuitry to its new decks. VCR Plus lets users program the VCR by entering four- to seven-digit codes from TV listings. The codes are published in many local newspapers, as well as in *TV Guide*.

Sony's 1991 VHS VCRs were best-sellers, thanks in part to their dual-mode

shuttle dial, which combines most transport functions in one easy-to-use control. The SLV-696 continues with the features that made last year's decks so desirable. It differs from the SLV-595 in that it offers a flying erase head, audio and video insert editing and a remote control that operates many brands of TV sets, instead of just Sonys. Both have hi-fi sound, digital auto tracking, a rapid-access tape transport, a tape stabilizer and automatic head cleaning.

The front of the deck is rather bare, with buttons for high-speed rewind and pause, and the dual-mode shuttle dial surrounding buttons for play and stop. Left of center sits a control compart-

HIGHLIGHTS

Sony's SLV-696 carries all the most desirable features from previous Sony 600-series VHS VCRs, including dual-mode shuttle control on both the VCR and the remote, context-sensitive onscreen help, 30-second skip search, high-speed rewind, a flying erase head, audio dub, video dub and a camcorder-friendly front A/V input. It adds VCR Plus timer programming, which lets users timeshift by entering numerical codes from TV listings. Its picture is very good, its audio is very good to excellent, and ease of use is excellent, for an overall very good to excellent rating. At \$649, it is a good value we recommend highly.

Sony SLV-696HF VHS VCR

Price: \$649

Weight & Size (h/w/d):
13.3 lbs.; 4 x 17 x
15-5/8 inches



Tape Format & Speeds: VHS: record—SP, EP; play—SP, LP, EP

Video Heads: 4

Rapid Search: locking—7x SP, 21x EP

Cue & Review Search: 7x SP, 21x EP

Fast Forward/Rewind Time: 4-1/2 min. for T-120, 3 min. in high-speed rewind

Remote Pause: Control S

Front-Panel Controls: dual-mode shuttle, buttons for power, high-speed rewind, play, stop, pause, eject, channel + and -, manual tracking up and down, record, TV/VTR, input select, counter reset, video insert, audio insert, tape speed,

quick timer and timer record; switches for command mode 1/2/3 and edit and a rotary sharpness control

Remote Control: IR wireless with switches for TV/VCR control and command mode 1/2/3, rockers for volume and channel. ■ dual-mode shuttle dial surrounding buttons for play and stop, and individual buttons for power, TV/VCR output, menu, four cursors, execute, 10-digit keypad, enter, timer clear, timer on/off, tape speed, input select, index, data screen, index mark, index erase, VCR Plus, once, daily, weekly, audio monitor, slow -, slow +, frame back, frame forward, high-speed rewind, reverse search, forward search, record (2), skip and

pause
Program Start Locator/Index/Cue: index—auto mark, manual mark/erase, search for marks up to 19

Audio: linear mono, hi-fi AFM stereo

Tuning Method: frequency synthesis

Channel Selectors: programmable scan on VCR, scan plus direct access on remote

Preset Method: auto program plus manual add/erase

Cable Tuning Range: A-8, 2 to 13, A to W, W+1 to W+58, A-5 to A-1, W+59 to W+84

Timer: 8-program/1-month, 3-hr. backup

Special Features: VCR Plus timer programming, flying erase head,

context-sensitive onscreen help, dual-mode shuttle control, still frame, bidirectional frame advance, slow motion, 2x speed play, skip search, front-panel A/V input, counter memory, audio dub, video dub, insert edit, auto rewind

Absent Features: titles/graphics, LANC remote control jack

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution: 240 lines

S/N Ratios (dB): unweighted video—43.9 SP, 41.5 EP; weighted video—49.7 SP, 49 EP chroma AM—47.2 SP, 43.3 EP; chroma PM—

39.6 SP, 38.7 EP

Audio Frequency Response: hi-fi—20 Hz-20 kHz, +0/-2.7 dB; linear (-3 dB)—100 Hz-11 kHz SP, 100 Hz-5 kHz EP

Hi-Fi Dynamic Range: 86.4 dB

Linear Audio S/N: 43.2 dB

Audio Distortion: hi-fi—0.3%, linear—0.9%

RATINGS

Picture: very good

Audio: very good/excellent

Ease of Use: excellent

Overall: very good/excellent

ment with audio/video inputs, a rotary sharpness control, switches for command mode and edit, and buttons for such functions as channel selection, tracking, record, audio insert and video insert. The back panel carries the usual set of A/V and RF inputs and outputs, with the addition of ■ Control S jack.

The remote control echoes the basic controls exposed on the VCR front panel. To these it adds a 30-second skip button, menu system controls, forward and reverse locking search, and basic TV controls. The TV buttons can be programmed to operate almost any brand of set. Across the center run the VCR Plus controls, including a button labeled VCR Plus and buttons for once, daily and weekly.

Using the VCR is very easy. The dual-mode shuttle concentrates most commonly used functions in a single convenient control on either the VCR or the remote. On the remote, locking search and 30-second skip buttons make finding the spot you want on the tape very easy. VCR Plus programming is available for those who find it more convenient, but standard programming is also available for those who don't have access to VCR Plus codes. However, all programming may be reviewed in date/time/channel form.

The main menu offers submenus for timer set/check, setup, tuner preset, set VCR Plus channels and clock set. Buttons for menu, four cursors, the 10-digit keypad and execute are all that you need for menu choices. Onscreen displays and context-sensitive help messages are available in English or French.

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VIDEOTEST
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CANON 8mm camcorder

The Canon E250 harks back to the original, shoe-style 8mm camcorders, often forgotten now that subcompact machines have become so popular. The "shoe" description comes from the lower camera section at the front, which makes the camcorder look like ■ shoe from the side. Shoe-style camcorders are usually easy to use because most have large buttons and no confusing menu system.

This model stands out because it has an optical 12x zoom lens that produces long telephoto shots without digital circuitry, which diminishes resolution. Another great feature is its six-watt video light, which fits into ■ powered shoe on top of the camcorder. The light uses power from the camcorder battery. This arrangement minimizes weight but halves battery life. If you plan on using the light, carry extra batteries.

HIGHLIGHTS

Canon's E250 shoe-style 8mm camcorder may look a little old-

fashioned in these days of constant camcorder innovation, but it's actually a very practical machine. Its 12x optical zoom range, while common on VHS camcorders, is unusually long for an 8mm. A supplied six-watt light slips into a powered accessory shoe and uses the camcorder battery for power, which is convenient, but diminishes battery life. It also features both character and digital memory titlers. Picture quality is good, audio is average and ease of use is very good. At \$1,499, it is more expensive than some competitors, but the features and overall good performance make it worth considering.

Its other attractive features include white balance lock, gain up, both character titles and digital memory graphics, a self-timer (which starts recording in 10 seconds, either continuously or for 30 seconds), an interval timer (which records ■ half-second shot every 10, 30 or 60 seconds) and an infrared remote control. You have ■ choice of fade triggers — a fade start/stop button on the remote produces fully automatic fades, while the fade button on the camcorder is the hold-down type.

The E250 relies on a standard configuration, with one notable exception: Canon's FlexiGrip. Combining the cam-

continued on page 96



Going Long:

The E250 is the first Canon 8mm camcorder with a 12x zoom lens.

VIDEOTESTS

VIDEOTEST
643

SONY Hi8 camcorder

Sony's success with the subcompact TR-series travel camcorders takes another step forward with the addition of image stabilization. The new CCD-TR101 uses a Steadyshot optical stabilizer that senses camera motion and corrects for it through a liquid-filled active prism that bends the image back to its initial position. A major advantage of this system is that the CCD image sensor always outputs maximum detail, compared to electronic stabilizers that use only a portion of the available pixels and change the portion used to compensate for movement. This image stabilization system was developed jointly with Canon.

Other features new on this model are 10-bit digital camera signal processing, digital fade to mosaic, a stereo/zoom mic with automatic wind noise switching, a 10x zoom and a directional remote control sensor that pops up from the top panel. Advanced synchro edit with preroll allows precise editing when the TR101 is used with certain Sony VCRs, including the Hi8 EV-S3000.

Data code, which stamps frames with time and date information, is re-



Clear Advantage: The TR101's optical stabilizer keeps the picture steady without degrading image quality.

corded in the vertical interval. It may be recalled later, but does not permanently blemish the recording as do the time/date imprinters found on most camcorders. This provides precise counter readings that are unaffected by tape slippage, or by placing a tape in the camcorder that has not been rewound.

Carried over from last year's CCD-TR81 (which remains in the line) are features like full-range inner autofocus, stereo sound, a tiny remote, 24-step manual exposure control, a digital superimposer, onscreen zoom and expo-

HIGHLIGHTS

Sony's CCD-TR101 builds on the winning formula of last year's

CCD-TR81 with the addition of optical image stabilization. Unlike electronic image stabilizers, this one does not reduce resolution. The TR101 also has a microphone that can automatically adjust its pickup pattern to match the 10x zoom range, a pop-up remote sensor, data code recording and mosaic digital fade. Picture quality is very good to excellent, audio quality is very good and ease of operation is excellent, for an overall rating of very good to excellent. At \$1,800, it's a good value.

Sony CCD-TR101 Hi8 Camcorder

Price: \$1,800

Weight & Size (h/w/d):
1.9 lbs. without batteries
and cassette; 4-1/4 x
4-3/8 x 7-1/2 inches



Image Sensor: 1/3-inch
CCD, 410,000 gross pixels

Lens: 1/1.6-2.9, 10x
(6.2-62mm) two-speed
power zoom

Filter Diameter: 52mm

**Minimum Focusing
Distance:** tele—31-1/2
inches, wide—1/2 inch

Autofocus: TTL

Minimum Illumination:
3.8 lux for 50 IRE

Iris: auto/manual

Fade: digital to mosaic or
black, trigger-operated

Shutter Speeds (sec.):
normal (1/60), 1/100,
1/250, 1/1,000, 1/2,000,
1/4,000, 1/10,000

White Balance: auto/
hold/outdoor/indoor

Viewfinder: electronic
CRT with focusing diop-
ter, LED record indicator
and onscreen indicators
for white balance, zoom
mic, image stabilizer,
manual focus. Hi8, oper-
ating speed, operating
mode, title mode and col-
or, counter, shutter
speed, zero memory,
fader, zoom scale, low
battery, cassette warning,
dew, head clog, trouble-
eject, low clock battery,
area number, area name,
data code, date/time and
iris scale

VCR Controls: stop, re-
wind/search, play, fast
forward/search, pause,
record and edit search

Microphone: stereo/
zoom electret condenser

Jacks: stereo mic, head-

phones, LANC remote,
DC out for RFU and in/
out switchable for S-vid-
eo/video/stereo audio

Tape Format & Speeds:
Hi8/8mm; record—SP,
play—SP/LP

Video Heads: 4

Edit Search: 1x

Cue & Review Search:
approx. 7x

**Fast Forward/Rewind
Time:** approx. 8 min. for
E6/P6-120

Remote Pause: LANC

Remote Control: IR
wireless with a slide
switch for hold and but-
tons for tele, wide, start/
stop, data code, rewind/
search, fast forward/
search, stop, play, pause
and data screen

Audio: hi-fi AFM stereo

Titles/Graphics: 1-page
digital memory in 8 col-
ors with reverse and scroll

Special Features: image
stabilization, flying erase
head, data code, preroll
synchro editing

Absent Features: digital
sound, audio dub, RC
time code, indexing

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution:
Hi8—400 lines,
8mm—250 lines

S/N Ratios (dB): un-
weighted luminance—
44.4, weighted lumi-
nance—50.1, unweighted

video—42.4, weighted
video—48.4, chroma
AM—42.2, chroma PM—
38.2

**Audio Frequency
Response:** 40 Hz-16
kHz, +0.1/-3 dB; -7.2 dB
■ 20 Hz, -7 dB at 20kHz

Dynamic Range: 74.6 dB

Audio Distortion: 0.3%

RATINGS

Picture:
very good/excellent

Audio: very good

Ease of Use: excellent

Overall:
very good/excellent

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		PROBLEM CHILD 2	0589500	THE WIZARD OF OZ	0001404	KING RALPH	0537308	THE UNTOUCHABLES	0432104
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		SHATTERED	0385807			ROBOCOP 2	0804005	LITTLE WOMEN (1949)	0876409
		TOTAL RECALL	0227603			JANE FONDA'S COMPLETE WORKOUT	0635904	DRIVING MISS DAISY	0982207
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		DIE HARD 2	0041806			SEVEN BRIDES FOR SEVEN BROTHERS	0251835	DR. ZHIVAGO	0002600
		THE KING AND I	0034702			PATTON	0004333	E.T. THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL	0681106
		THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY	0058206			ALIEN	0000208	THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK	0091009
		NOT WITHOUT MY DAUGHTER	0722603			ALIENS	0360909	RETURN OF THE JEDI	0354704
		PREDATOR	0364901			YOUNG GUNS	0726604		
		PREDATOR 2	0104307			YOUNG GUNS II	0041202		
		PETER PAN	0897009			TANGO & CASH	0647404		
		MY FAIR LADY	0350751			GHOST DAD	0497404		
		ON GOLDEN POND	0052357			KICKBOXER	0674200		
		BUNS OF STEEL	0345900			KICKBOXER 2	0386102		
		DOUBLE IMPACT	0396507			PAINT YOUR WAGON	0304907		
		HOT SHOTS	0029108			CAMELOT	0602748		
						THE ROOKIE	0969204		
						POINT BREAK	0337204		
						RAMBLING ROSE	0691709		
						REGARDING HENRY	0842906		
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						STAR TREK IV (DIRECTOR'S SERIES)	0691808		

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VIDEO SHOWCASE

A GUIDE TO NEW VIDEO & SATELLITE PRODUCTS



BOGEN 3169 CINE/VIDEO TRIPOD

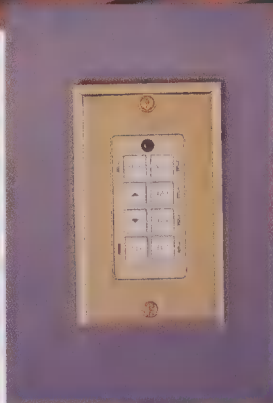
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Easy to use and
easy to handle,
the 3169
combines Bogen
3001 Tripod Legs

and a 3130 QR Micro Fluid Head with Quick Release Plate. The Bogen 3001 Tripod is the lightest (about 3 lbs.) and the smallest (folds to 20 1/2 in.), but is one of the most versatile tripods we offer. Sturdy, hard finish aluminum legs feature 3 click stop spread angles and each has a sure grip, quick-acting, non-fouling lever lock. The Bogen 3169 is just one of a wide choice of tripods, fluid heads, dollies and accessories.

See your dealer or write to Bogen Photo Corp., 565 East Crescent Avenue, Ramsey, N.J. 07446-0506; (201) 818-9500

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Phone: 510/293-0183, ext 16; Fax: 510/293-0189

CIRCLE SHOWCASE #2

Chaparral Monterey Satellite Receivers

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The Best in
Sights &
Sounds



The Monterey satellite receiver's unique four-way audio/video switcher lets you easily select from a host of satellite TV options or as many as three other audio/video alternatives — and from any room in the house. Your VCR, camcorder or CD player can be on-line and entertainment-ready at all times. And with the receiver's digital color P-I-P functions, you can toggle on-screen between any two of these inputs at once. What's more, several Monterey models offer the best in satellite sound in digital or analog stereo, and with Dolby surround sound and dynamic noise reduction. The Monterey is the essential control center to the ultimate home entertainment experience.

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CIRCLE SHOWCASE #4

sure meters, a recallable data screen, and a world clock with time-zone and daylight-saving-time switching.

The TR101 is slightly smaller than most other TR-series camcorders, although it appears larger because of the camera bulge that houses the image stabilizer. There is no manual zoom, but a two-speed power zoom helps compensate. A ring controls the powered manual focus, which gives it a natural feel.

The microphone appears bug-eyed because of its three grilles—one faces forward, and one to each side. These provide stereo sound, and facilitate the optional zoom feature of the microphone. The mic grilles surround a pop-up infrared sensor for the remote control. It swivels so you can control the camcorder from any direction.

The TR101 follows the pattern set by previous TR models, with run/stop and zoom controls in the familiar places, playback controls on top, and numerous camera controls along the left side. The Steadyshot switch is conveniently located on the lower left of the lens cowl. Nearby sit buttons for manual focus, white balance, shutter speed and exposure, and a thumbwheel that accesses 24 exposure steps. These controls are operational only when auto lock is off.

The viewfinder may be tilted up for low-angle shooting. Underneath are controls for functions including stereo audio channel selection, edit, daylight-saving and area (time zone) and secondary record start/stop.

The remote control is barely wider than a finger, but a lot thinner. It has a switch to prevent accidental operation and buttons for tele, wide, start/stop,

data code and all playback functions.

Like other TR-series camcorders, the TR101 is easy to operate. It uses no menus, and both the data screen and display provide more than enough feedback to reassure you of what options are selected. Because it does not visibly degrade images, the stabilizer may be left on for most shooting. Beginners can set the camcorder to auto lock, so they don't have to worry about focus, white balance, shutter speed and exposure. The automatic zoom mic seems both more natural and more professional than conventional zoom mics.

These features combine with the light weight and compactness to make the TR101 ideal for almost any type of shooting, but it's especially good for traveling, when you're never quite sure what conditions you'll encounter. Ease of use is excellent.

Picture quality is very good to excellent compared with other Hi8 camcorders we've measured. Audio quality is very good, for an overall very good to excellent rating. The TR101 builds on the traits that made the TR81 one of our all-time favorites, and its image stabilizer makes it a must-see if you're shopping for a Hi8 camcorder. ■

SONY VCR

continued from page 15

Index marks are automatically inserted when recording is started from stop and you may manually add or erase index marks to let you return to those marks. Bidirectional frame advance and slow motion make it easy to analyze ac-

tion that takes place quickly, and the data screen provides not only the counter, but date, time, index, scan operating mode, tape speed and approximate position on the tape. Audio dub, video dub and the flying erase head allow you to perform all basic editing functions. Ease of use is excellent.

Picture quality measures very good, while audio performance is very good to excellent, making this deck a top performer among VHS hi-fi VCRs. Our overall rating is very good to excellent—the SLV-696 is a top-notch home theater deck, a good editing deck and an excellent value. ■

TECH TIP

Screen size solution

I have devised a useful formula for determining the proper size video monitor for your viewing habits. Simply divide the diagonal screen size (in inches) of the set you are considering by the distance (in feet) at which you plan to view the set. The resulting number should be somewhere between three and four. Should your tastes run to letterboxed fare, this number should be between four and four-and-a-half. This method will spare you the disappointment of buying too small a screen, and the headache of trying to watch a 52-inch monitor from seven feet.

A.J. Lehe
Birmingham, Alabama

VS9

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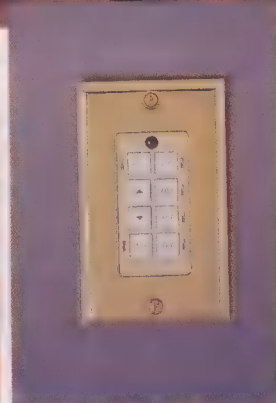
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and a 3130 QR Micro Fluid Head with Quick Release Plate. The Bogen 3001 Tripod is the lightest (about 3 lbs.) and the smallest (folds to 20 1/2 in.), but is one of the most versatile tripods we offer. Sturdy, hard finish aluminum legs feature 3 click stop spread angles and each has a sure grip, quick-acting, non-fouling lever lock. The Bogen 3169 is just one of a wide choice of tripods, fluid heads, dollies and accessories.

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sure meters, a recallable data screen, and a world clock with time-zone and daylight-saving-time switching.

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A.J. Lehe
Birmingham, Alabama



SATELLITE TV

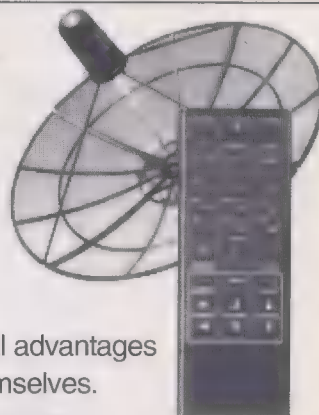
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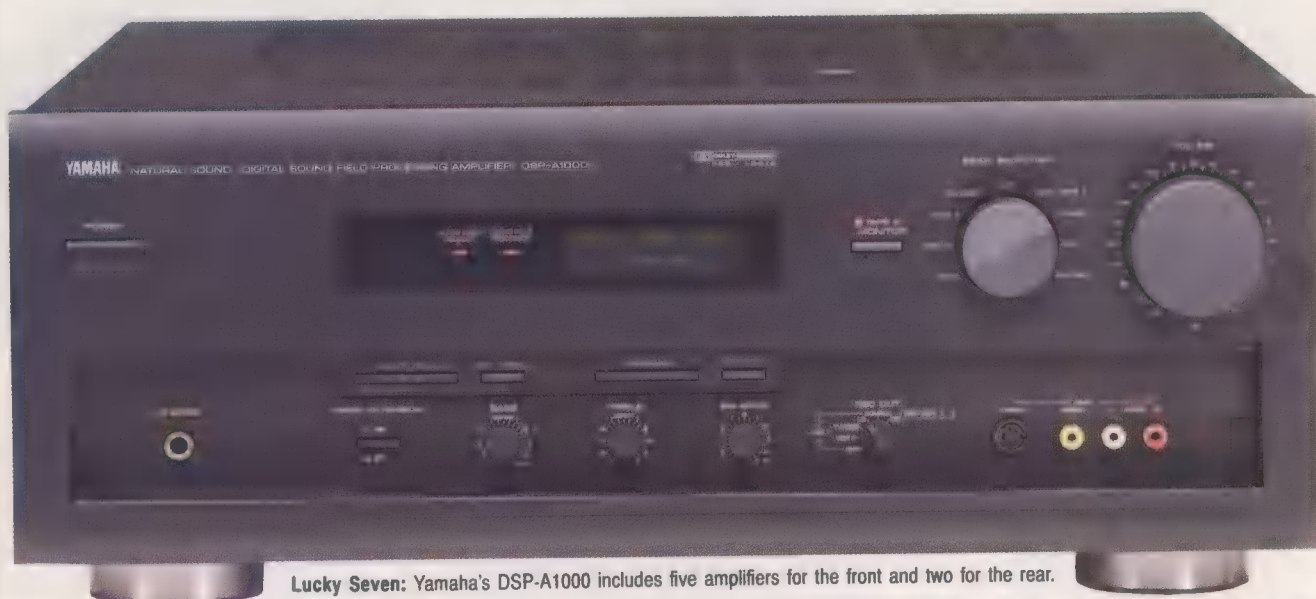
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VIDEOTESTS



Lucky Seven: Yamaha's DSP-A1000 includes five amplifiers for the front and two for the rear.

VIDEOTEST
644

YAMAHA A/V amplifier

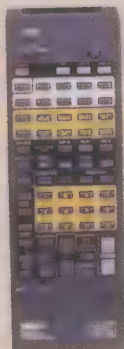
Although most major audio companies sell one or more audio/video amplifiers and receivers, the offerings tend to be pretty bland. Most are just standard receivers with a Dolby Pro-Logic decoder and a few extra channels of amplification thrown in. But Yamaha's DSP-A1000 amplifier is in another class—it offers

quality and versatility approaching that of systems using high-end surround decoders and separate amps.

The DSP-A1000 uses digital processing to recreate the sound of many famous showplaces around the world by manipulating direct and reflected sound plus delay. Some of the surround environments are even named, like the Anaheim Stadium and New York City's Village Gate jazz club.

It creates these sound fields using seven channels of amplification. A complete system uses left and right main speakers, one or two center speakers, left and right rear speakers, and left and

Yamaha DSP-A1000 A/V Amplifier



Price: \$1,500

Weight & Size (h/w/d):
44 lbs.; 6-3/4 x 17-1/8
x 18-1/2 inches

Remote Control: IR wireless with a transmit/learn LED; recessed buttons for reset and clear; slide switches for Yamaha RS/user/learn, 1/2 page for CD/LD keys and parameter set/menu; and buttons for power, TV, VCR 1, VCR 2, tape 2 monitor, DAT/tape 1, tuner, CD, phono, aux, VCR 2, VCR 1, TV/DBS, LD, sound, chapter - and +, pause/stop, display, still/step forward and reverse, search forward

and reverse, TV/VCR, direction A, play, direction B, deck A/B, pause, rewind/search, stop, fast forward/search, test, A/B/C/D/E, preset/channel - and +, front level - and +, center level - and +, rear level - and +, master volume - and +, cursor - and +, cursor up and down, onscreen, effect on/off, muting, and 12 effects—hall 1, hall 2, hall 3, church, rock concert, jazz club, disco, stadium, concert video, TV theater, movie theater and Dolby Pro-Logic

Inputs: stereo audio—phono, CD, tuner, tape

1, tape 2 and main amp; S-video/video/stereo audio—aux, LD, TV/DBS, VCR 1, VCR 2

Outputs: stereo audio—tape 1 record, tape 2 record, main preamp out, center, front effects and rear effects; mono audio—mono and subwoofer; S-video/video/stereo audio—VCR 1 record and VCR 2 record; monitor out—video and S-video; left and right speakers out—main, front effects, center and rear

Amplifier Power:
(20 Hz-20 kHz into 8 ohms/6 ohms) main—80 W/100 W, 0.015%

HIGHLIGHTS

Yamaha's DSP-A1000 digital sound field processing amplifier is

one of the most versatile A/V amplifiers yet. It uses seven channels of amplification to reproduce 24 digitally simulated sound fields, which duplicate the acoustics of several major showplaces throughout the world. It provides Dolby Pro-Logic decoding for correct reproduction of encoded movies. Video and audio quality are both excellent, and operational ease is very good with a little practice, so overall performance is very good to excellent. At \$1,500, it is an exceedingly good value.

THD: center—80 W/100 W, 0.015% THD; front effects and rear effects—25 W/30 W, 0.05% THD

RESULTS

Video Frequency Response: video—10 MHz, -4.1 dB; S-video—10 MHz, -2.4 dB

Picture S/N (dB): unweighted luminance—52.6, weighted luminance—62.3, unweighted video—61.7, weighted video—66.8, chroma AM—66.6, chroma PM—49.9

Audio Frequency Response: 20 Hz-20

kHz; main and center—+0.2/-0.5 dB, effects—+0.2/-0.6 dB

Audio S/N: phono—87.3 dB; others—96.8 dB

Channel Separation: (1kHz) phono—68.8 dB, others—60.3 dB

Distortion: phono—0.01%; others—0.005%

RATINGS

Video: excellent

Audio: excellent

Ease of Use: very good

Overall: very good/excellent

Philips Presents CD-Interactive

When the engineers from Philips invented CD audio, they knew they were at the forefront of a remarkable new technology.

Naturally, they continued to evolve their idea.

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latest Philips innovation: CD-Interactive.

The Philips CD-Interactive player connects quickly and easily to both your television and stereo system. By simply inserting a CD-I title into the player, you can then use the special "thumbstick" remote to chart your own course along the CD-I disc, controlling everything you see and hear.

And because CD-I is a global standard, the Philips CD-Interactive player will be compatible with all forthcoming CD-I titles. It is also backwards compatible with 3" and 5" audio CDs, CD Graphics, CD ROM-XA "bridge" discs, and forward compatible with the new Photo CDs.

Philips CD-Interactive is clearly the next generation of both television and CD audio. Once you've experienced CD-I, we think you'll find it impossible to get it out of your system.



The Hardware



PHILIPS

right front effects speakers, which should be mounted above the main speakers, near the ceiling. Yamaha provides a line-level subwoofer output, but you'll need to provide an amplifier for the subwoofer. You may omit the center channel by selecting the phantom center channel option, and you may omit the front effects speakers by combining these sounds with the main front speakers. Each of these options compromises sound quality slightly.

With 24 memorized sound fields and so many sources, Yamaha has accomplished a major feat by allowing a user to control many options without confusion. Nearly all adjustments can be made by remote control with an onscreen display to guide you, but you'll need to spend a little while exploring the options before adjusting them becomes second nature. However, then you'll even be able to modify sound fields and return them to their original settings from a provided table. The system's flexibility and high performance are truly impressive.

The only exposed controls are the power switch, the volume control, the input selector and a tape 2 monitor selector. Left of center is a window covering the remote sensor, discrete indicat-

ors for Dolby Pro-Logic and sound field processor, and a small, versatile alphanumeric display. A door covers a compartment with a headphone jack, an S-video/video/stereo audio input and two rows of controls. In the upper row are buttons for set menu and effect, and plus/minus rockers for input trim and program. In the larger main row are a bass extension switch, and rotary controls for bass, treble, balance and a VCR 1 record selector.

The rear panel holds a forest of connectors, plus a rotary main level control, a grounding screw and switches for front mix and single/dual center-channel speakers. It has stereo audio inputs for phono, CD, tuner, tape 1 and tape 2, and S-video/video/stereo audio inputs for LD, TV/DBS, VCR 1 and VCR 2. It has stereo audio outputs for tape 1 and tape 2 record, S-video/video/stereo audio outputs for VCR 1 and VCR 2 record playback, and S-video/video monitor outputs.

A row of speaker connectors has left and right pairs for main, center, front effects and rear effects. There are also paired line outputs for main, center, front and rear effects, and single outputs for mono and subwoofer. Line inputs for

main left, main right and center amplifiers are connected to the preamp outputs by jumpers, but the other preamp connections to amplifiers are internal. It also has three AC sockets, two switched and one unswitched.

The remote control has a few switches for setup and logical groups of controls for power, input selectors, LD/CD control, DAT/tape/VCR control, test, tuner VCR/TV channel, digital sound field select, amplifier/parameter control, mute and master volume. Many groups, including disc control, tape control and sound field, have two sets for functions and most buttons can be user-programmed for different brands of equipment.

The DSP-A1000 can be set up much like any other integrated amplifier, but there are many more connections to cover all of the video and audio inputs and outputs. Speaker connection, too, is standard, but remember to observe correct polarities. You can leave the jumpers at their factory settings, unless you plan to use other amplifiers. To set the rear switches, you need only know whether you'll be using two center speakers or one, and whether you'll be using both main and effects front speakers or just main. There'll be a mess of cables, so invest in cable ties to avoid a rat's nest. We strongly recommend labeling the ends of all the cables.

Using the DSP-A1000 is not difficult, but you need to familiarize yourself with both source switching and the sound field options to get the best out of the system. The main source switch is on the outside of the amplifier; the smaller source selector in the compartment lets VCR 1 record from the same or any other source without interrupting your main program.

Depending on the surround mode chosen, the DSP system lets you control room size simulation, initial (first reflection) delay, room liveliness simulation, low-pass filter, reverberation time, effects delay, directional enhancement and Dolby Pro-Logic. The manual explains how these parameters affect the sound image. There are eight basic music surround modes. There are also several video modes: pop/rock and classical music video, TV drama and sports, 70mm movie theater general and adventure, and normal and enhanced (or 35mm) Dolby Pro-Logic.

We strongly recommend you spend a little time experimenting with these parameters to understand how they work. Then you'll have a powerful tool to modify or create your own sound environment. With the right speakers, correct speaker placement and careful

continued on page 98



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N • E • W PRODUCTS

BY BRIAN CLARK

Late-breaking Summer CES highlights

The just-completed Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago saw lots of new products introduced. In fact, since the show was open to consumers for the first time, some of you may have already glimpsed many of the innovations due soon in stores. Below are some highlights of the show. Look for complete coverage in next month's issue.



NEW FOR THE PALM

Panasonic's new line of camcorders includes the PV-362, a VHS-C model that boasts a 10x zoom lens and a price of \$1,299. White balance and iris can be controlled manually or automatically. Additional features include hi-fi stereo sound, a five-watt light and color digital fade.

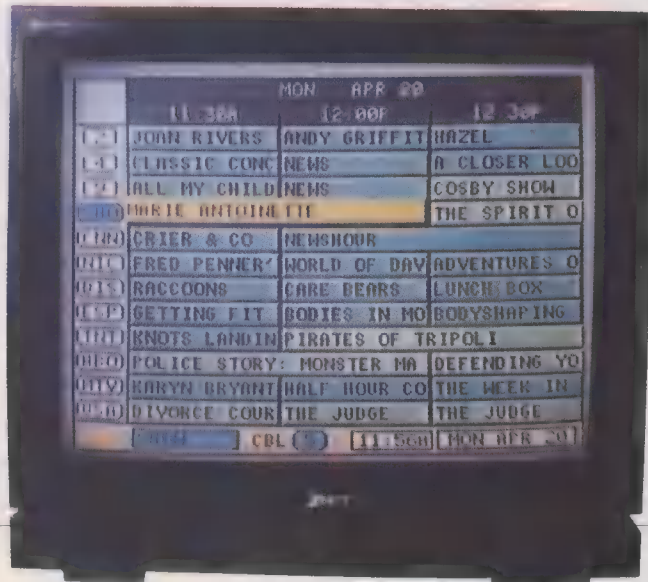


SMOOTH OPERATOR

Ricoh's R-18H Hi8 camcorder (\$1,799) uses Ricoh's SmoothShot optical image-stabilization system. The angle of a prismatic lens within the body is controlled by sensors that detect horizontal and vertical movement. The user has the option of full manual control of white balance and iris. Audio can be switched between a stereo shotgun zoom mic and two side mics that offer a wider recording angle.

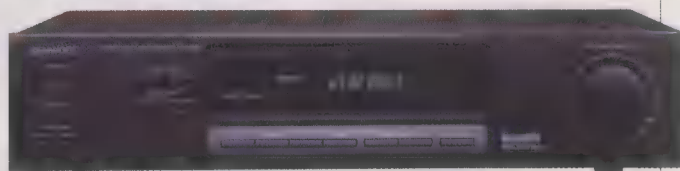
ZENITH TEAMS WITH INSIGHT

The InSight Telecast system gives viewers an interactive, onscreen program guide that permits VCR programming at the touch of a button. Beginning early next year, Zenith will add the InSight system to its TV sets. Later, Zenith expects to add InSight decoding to its VCRs as well. InSight screens display TV programs by title, channel or category in either grid or column formats. To program a VCR, a user simply selects a show title and presses record. InSight's listings are transmitted in compressed form in the vertical blanking intervals broadcast by PBS channels.



JACK OF ALL TRADES

JVC's HR-D990 hi-fi stereo VHS VCR (\$600) allows users to perform random assemble edits for up to eight cuts. A second JVC deck with a pause-in terminal is required to access the feature. The four-head HR-D990 produces noise-free special effects, and the Hyper-Bass feature enhances the lower frequencies on soundtracks for more theaterlike sound.



PRO-LOGIC FOR PEANUTS

Kenwood's SS-992 surround processor, priced just under \$300, offers Dolby Pro-Logic decoding with built-in center (30 watts) and rear (15 watts) amplifiers. Modes include phantom, wide, normal and Dolby 3 for a system without rear speakers.

All in all I am confident that CD-I will play a dramatic role in the future...I give CD-I a thumbs up!

Harry Somerfield
San Francisco Chronicle

The Reviews

This technology may well signal the start of a new era of interactive entertainment and education.

Brent Butterworth
Kenneth Korman
Video

Philips CD-I system is one of the year's 100 greatest achievements in science and technology.

"Best Of What's New"
Popular Science

Children can reap the benefits of CD-I, too. Titles based on Sesame Street characters and Mother Goose rhymes, along with interactive coloring books and other educational games, stress the value of CD-I as a learning tool.

Frank Vizard
Rolling Stone

**YES, IT SINGS! IT DANCES!
IT TELLS YOU STORIES AND
TAKES YOU PLACES YOU'VE
NEVER BEEN BEFORE!**

Johnathon Takiff
Daily News

Tom Malcom
Info Magazine

CD-I also includes a photo CD standard which was jointly developed by Philips and Kodak for storing photos on CD. The image quality is as good or better than anything you'll see on cable TV.

Okay. So we've told you that the Philips CD-Interactive is

the next generation of both television and audio.

And we've gone on and on

about our amazing selection of CD-I titles.

But because our opinion is, admittedly, more than a little biased, we wouldn't dream of asking you to settle for our word on it.

We would, however, like you to consider the opinions of electronics writers from coast to coast who've had the chance to see the Philips CD-Interactive system in action.

Review after review heralds CD-I as the future of home entertainment and a format that's here to stay.

Popular Science even went so far as to call it one of 1991's 100 greatest achievements in science and technology.

Of course, the opinion that matters most is, ultimately, yours. So we'd like to encourage you to take your own CD-I test drive. For the name of the Philips dealer nearest you, call **1-800-223-7772**.



PHILIPS

Q&A

BY RODERICK WOODCOCK

Overmodulation, lens hoods and wired LANC remotes

Q I've read that S-VHS and Hi8 tapes won't play on regular VHS or 8mm VCRs. But what exactly does that mean? It seems to me that if the cassettes are compatible, you're going to get some sort of picture on the screen.

Rod Bently
Los Angeles, California

This effect can be corrected in the playback circuitry, though, and many newer VCRs can play S-VHS tapes without exhibiting these picture flaws. The Japanese call this feature Midoki, while Panasonic has dubbed it SQPB for Super Quasi Play Back. While you get a viewable image, you don't gain the extra

lens is being focused. Recently introduced inner-focus lens systems use a stationary front lens, and focus by the movement of a smaller lens inside the lens assembly itself. This makes it possible to use rectangular lens hoods.

According to the pros at Canon, Fuji, Hitachi, Ikegami and other companies supplying lenses to the professional market, rectangular hoods conform more accurately to the aspect ratio of the scene being videotaped, and are better able to keep reflections and glare that would degrade picture quality off the front surface of the lens. To my knowledge, Minolta's Pro 8-918 is the only consumer camcorder that has a rectangular hood.

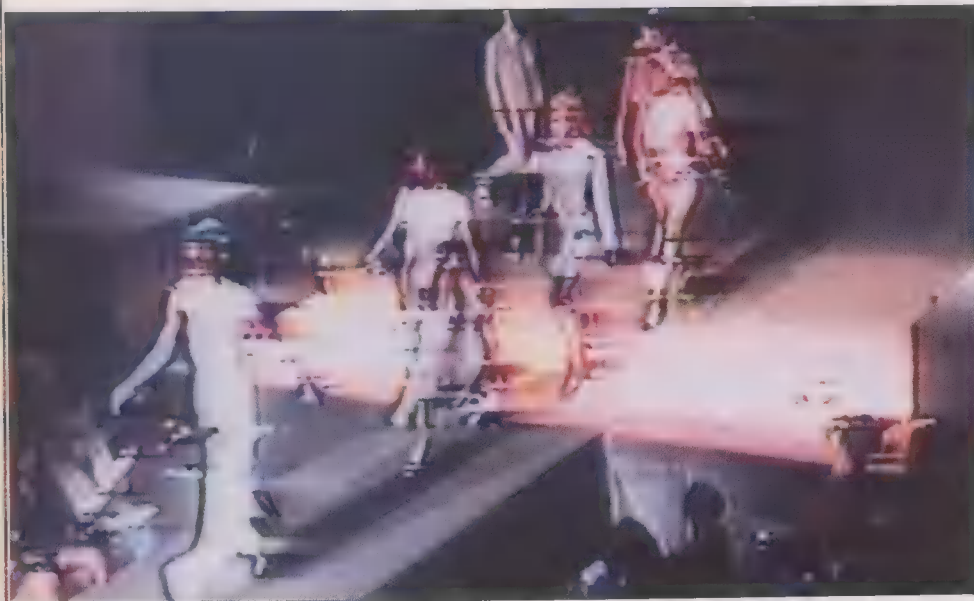
Q I have a Sony CCD-V701 8mm camcorder. Since it's not always convenient to use the wireless remote control that came with it, I would like to set up a remote control with a wire and push-button switch, connected to the Control L jack. Could you provide a schematic diagram and parts list?

J.P. Johnson
Knoxville, Tennessee

A Sorry, but the Control L, or LANC, jack on Sony camcorders (and other brands bearing the LANC logo) is extremely complicated. Unlike the remote pause line on some other camcorders, which is often just a simple open-and-close circuit, the LANC jack is multifaceted. You can't accomplish what you want easily or inexpensively. But Sony does sell the RM-95 wired remote control, which will give you access to all major functions on your V701. It costs about \$100.

You can purchase documentation on LANC from Sony Parts in Kansas City. The order number is 997245311. It costs about \$10, plus about \$4 for shipping. ■

Video Magazine welcomes your questions. Please include a phone number, but not a return envelope as the volume of mail does not permit replies. All letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address queries to Q & A, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.



Losing Streak: This Hi8 tape shows overmodulation—highlight streaking—when played in an 8mm camcorder.

A We've often written that high-resolution formats don't play well on standard-resolution equipment, but unless you've seen the results we can understand your confusion. So we're printing a picture to show you what it looks like.

As you can see, the image is very streaky, with a lot of jagged whites tearing sideways from highlight areas. The effect is called overmodulation, and it occurs because the luminance signal—the area of the video signal where the black-and-white part of the picture resides—is recorded at a higher frequency in S-VHS or Hi8 than in their lower resolution counterparts. Since standard decks don't have the compatible circuitry to properly interpret the S-VHS or Hi8 signals, they reproduce what they can, resulting in an extremely overmodulated picture.

sharpness and resolution of S-VHS. For that, you still need a real S-VHS deck. On the Hi8 side, Sony's GV-300 Video Walkman can play Hi8 tapes, but with the resolution of standard 8mm.

Q On TV news programs, you see a lot of amateur and professional camcorders being used. Some of the professional camcorders use round lens hoods, while others use square lens hoods. Is there any advantage of one over the other? Do any amateur camcorders use square lens hoods?

Jim Langford
Cerritos, California

A The hoods on the majority of camcorders, both professional and amateur, have traditionally been round. This is partly for esthetics, but mostly because the front lens assembly rotates when the

For the best view in the galaxy, see *Star Trek VI* on laserdisc.



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Circle 53 on Reader Service Card.

BY LAWRENCE B. JOHNSON

Art & Industry:
Zenith designer works
with CAD/CAM program
to check controls for a
25-inch TV.



THE SHAPE OF SCREENS TO COME



Making It New:
Concept sketch by Ze-
nith designers for a
projection TV with a
unique curved profile.

*How top TV designers
play with perception to
make tomorrow's sets
thinner, sleeker, wilder*

Remember when a television was just a TV set? That's when catching a movie meant going out to the cinema. Today, the TV has metamorphosed into a video monitor or a monitor/receiver. It's a high-performance component, the central element in complex audio/video systems—and living rooms. And thanks to new big-screen models, you can join in *The Hunt for Red October* or saddle up with the *Silverado* gang without budging from your easy chair. But when the show's over and you'd like your living room back, that behemoth of a box remains center stage in your life. You could cover it with a tarpaulin, but tarps are hard to find in decorator colors.

Enter Eichi Kamiya. He doesn't sell tarps. He's chief of television design for Mitsubishi Electronics. It's his job to make big TV sets fit into home environments, and to make them approachable for consumers who do not hold engineering degrees. Kamiya and his counterparts at other TV manufacturers are the buffers between technology unbound and the human condition.

It's their job to mediate the inevitable design conflicts between company technicians (who dream about what might be possible if new models were to include two more triple-function buttons and a deeper chassis) and viewers concerned with solving problems like how to connect a VCR to a TV already accommodating cable service on antenna A and a Nintendo system on antenna B.

The changing character of TV sets and the increasing demands being



The Lean Look:

Large new TVs emphasize slim lines and space-saving designs, like those for Sony's 32-inch KV-32XBR95S (far left), RCA's radically compact 52-inch P52152 projection set (left) and Toshiba's 30-inch CN3081B Cinema Series TV (below).



Concept study for 9-inch RCA TV.

placed on them are raising a flurry of tricky issues that TV design chiefs are being called on to grapple with. These range from finding ways for sets to house new, advanced features to the shape of the TV itself, an issue of growing significance given viewers' increasing preference for bigger screens. How Kamiya and the industrial designers at other electronics manufacturers cope with these problems profoundly affects not only the way TV sets look, but our response to their performance and our willingness to buy them.

Reducing the big-screen TV cabinet, or at least making it appear smaller, is the designer's number-one challenge, said Kamiya in a telephone hookup from Mitsubishi's world headquarters in Tokyo. "Everyone likes a big screen, but not everyone likes a big cabinet, so saving space becomes important. Besides, to enjoy the picture on the screen, the distraction of the cabinet must be reduced to a minimum."

It was Kamiya's design team that collaborated with Mitsubishi's engineers to produce the Slim Profile line of rear-projection TV sets. These sets are so thin the 50-inch VS5017S has a chassis depth of just 22.5 inches, or about six inches less than standard projection cabinets. The design strategy can be summed up in two words, "compact and simple," says Kamiya.

Shallow cabinets for big screens are also being created by a couple of other major TV makers, like Sony and Panasonic. "You want the television to fit the scale of your other furniture," says Panasonic design chief Oz Mazzetta. "The closer you can get it to the wall, the more depth you can take out of the cabinet, the better it's going to be accepted in most homes."

At Sony, designer Kaz Ichikawa explains that the color and finish of the TV cabinet affect your perception of how big it is. "It's critical that such a large box not be visually emphasized," notes Ichikawa. "You wouldn't want a white



cabinet on a 32-inch TV. It would dominate the room. For larger sets, dark gray or black is best. Darker tones also help to minimize reflections, of objects in the



Home Theatrics: Studies for widescreen 60-inch projection sets for RCA, using movie theater architectural references.

SCREENS TO COME

room or of room light, that can disturb the picture."

The materials of TV cabinetry have also changed—to everyone's advantage, says Rick Althans, director of industrial design for Zenith Electronics. "In the past, it was desirable to be more traditional, to make the TV fit in with the rest of the furniture in a room, usually the living room," Althans observes. "But we're no longer thinking in terms of French provincial. The look today is high-tech. Wood has been replaced by plastic, which by its very nature—as a liquid form—contributes to the sense of complete design integration."

What is acceptable to an American consumer may depend, however, on where the question is asked. According to Toshiba's top designer, Kimiyoshi Ban, video buffs on the East and West coasts find the high-tech look of black easiest to live with, while Middle America prefers big cabinets in natural oak.

One popular twist on the new look is the softening appearance of "suede" paint. "Touch is very important," observes Kamiya. "So a paint that looks like cloth is appealing to consumers." Widespread as suede paint may be, it's tricky to blend for just the right "feel" and no two manufacturers are likely to use the same mix. When Panasonic decided to use suede on its SuperFlat models, says Mazzetta, "it took about three months to work out a formula that gave us the texture we wanted."



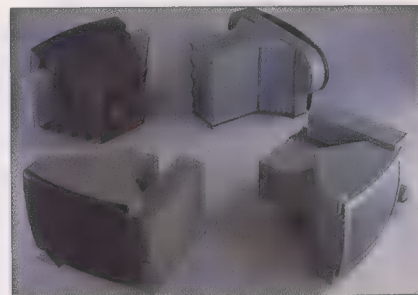
Rockin' Roller:
New remote for Sony XBR2 TV sets shows Programmable Rocker feature directly below hinged door.



Winged Combo:
RCA study for a 9-inch TV with streamlined side speakers and a built-in 8mm VCR.

CONFRONTING THE TUBE

Tube televisions present the designer with a smaller beast to wrestle than projection sets, but every voice agrees that direct-view has one mean and nasty design feature that cannot be wished away: the picture tube itself. "That's the essential design problem—dealing with the picture tube and chassis and how they relate to one another," says Lewis Lenzi, head designer for Thomson's RCA and ProScan TV sets. For example, says Lenzi, while "the picture tube determines how deep the cabinet must be," the faceplate is no longer the main surface receiving design attention. "It used to be," adds Lenzi, but "now that televisions have become true A/V components, the rear panel has become important as well. With all the audio and video connections offered, this has become a key area of customer interac-



Cube Tubes: Concept studies by RCA for a 13-inch stereo TV feature playful shapes and pastel accents.

tion—and the design team must make sure it's a pleasant experience."

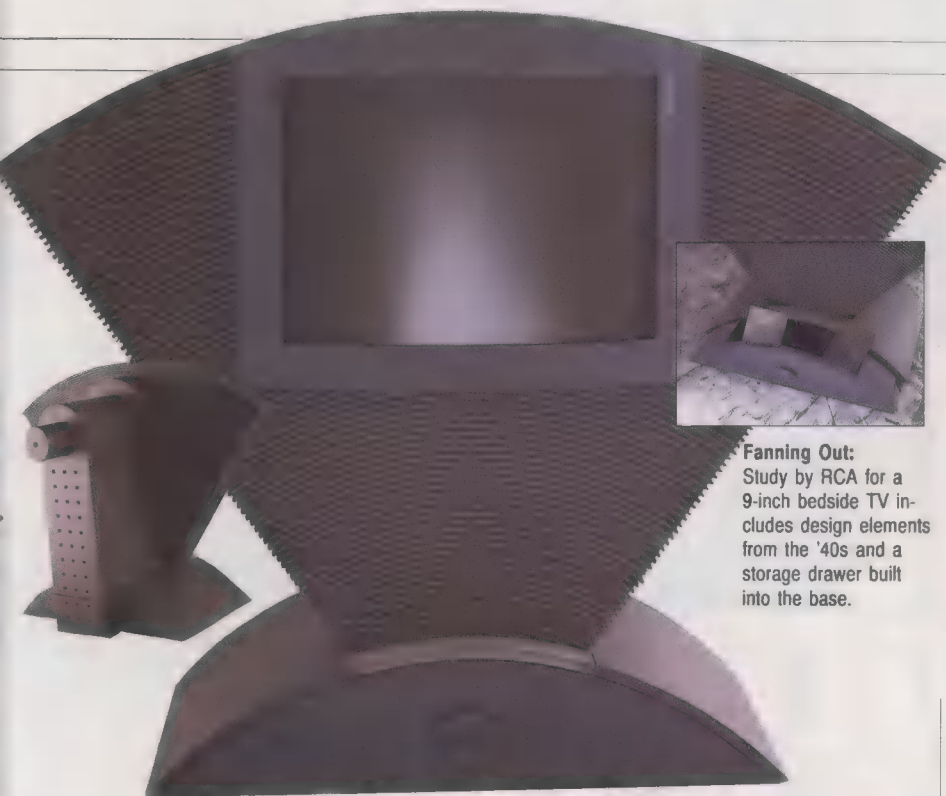
Mazzetta is more graphic: "By the time you've connected a VCR and a laserdisc player, the wires hanging down and draping all over are terrible. On our SuperFlat sets, we use a trap door for all the leads, which are routed straight

Squeezing Too Many Buttons Into Too Little Space

Getting a handle on it shouldn't be hard. But the typical TV remote control, with its smorgasbord of buttons, tends to leave consumers scratching their heads. For designers, the defiant little remote represents a major challenge: to find a happy medium between versatility and friendliness.

"Most people use the remote rather than controls on the TV itself," says Mitsubishi designer Eichi Kamiya. "For American consumers, the real problem seems to be too many buttons. Multifunction buttons are difficult, so we developed onscreen menus that take you through logical sequences the way computers do." Japanese consumers, notes Kamiya, "prefer buttons and direct commands. They're not comfortable with screen menus."

Toshiba is also convinced that multifunction keys are too much for most consumers to grapple with. It prefers



Fanning Out:
Study by RCA for a 9-inch bedside TV includes design elements from the '40s and a storage drawer built into the base.



In a Blue Mood: 1989 concept set proved a forerunner for upcoming "biomorphic" TVs from RCA.

down into an integrated base stand. Once you've hooked everything up, you don't see any wires at all."

But sometimes a good idea fails to connect. Witness the flip-up component

terminal box Mitsubishi offered on the rear of some direct-view models. It worked, it was handy. Alas, reports Kamiya, "the connectors inside were just too expensive." While Mitsubishi still offers the feature, it has not proven to be especially popular with consumers and may not be included in future models.

Nevertheless, we've come a long way from the sheet of Masonite that once constituted rear-panel "design." Today's TV sets are created to be beautiful on all sides. It's what Lenzi calls sculptural design. But this doesn't solve a fundamental problem: How can the large housing around a 35-inch picture tube be made visually tolerable? The same answer seems to come from every direction—disguise this big high-tech box as a natural object. And since nature abhors not only a vacuum but straight lines, the latest buzz words in TV design are bio-

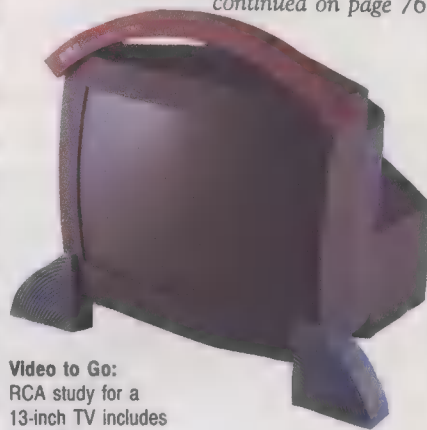
morphic and organic.

"When we first worked on the box design, about 10 years ago, we produced square cabinets with a lot of empty space inside," recalls Sony's Ichikawa. "But since the picture tube has a narrow neck, we began shaping the cabinet along the lines of the picture tube, which reduced the size. Now all the

continued on page 76



Wraparound: New 13-inch RCA ColorTrak set.



Video to Go:
RCA study for a 13-inch TV includes a handle.

to add two keys that divide the onscreen menu into picture and audio functions, beyond the basic setup procedure. "This provides for better understanding," declares Toshiba design chief Kimiyoshi Ban.

But Oz Mazzetta at Panasonic feels onscreen menus have "gotten out of hand. Part of the problem may be words, just too many words. Maybe we need to develop a system of symbols, like those on road signs. We need to simplify the messages going to the TV and reduce the number of buttons on the remote to six or seven."

Thomson designer Lewis Lenzi came up with another approach that is proving popular: shaped buttons, which divide functions into tactile subgroups. Created for RCA televisions, the concept was such a hit that Thomson reintroduced it in a universal remote that, as Lenzi recalls, "exceeded sales forecasts by seven or eight times."

Sony is creeping up on the problem from another direction, mouselike. "We've found that the customer's eyes leave the (remote) commander when he's trying to adjust the TV from his chair," says designer Kaz Ichikawa, "so we've come up with something like a computer mouse that you rock against your thumb to activate an onscreen menu. An arrow points to your options." The "programmable rocker" control appears on remotes for Sony's new XBR² TV sets.

Zenith has adopted the second-remote approach: a comprehensive commander for initial setup and major adjustments plus another, smaller device that offers only the most frequently used controls: on/off, channel up/down, volume, mute and recall. Designer Rick Althans refers to the mini-commander by a name that says it all—the "everyday remote."

—LBJ

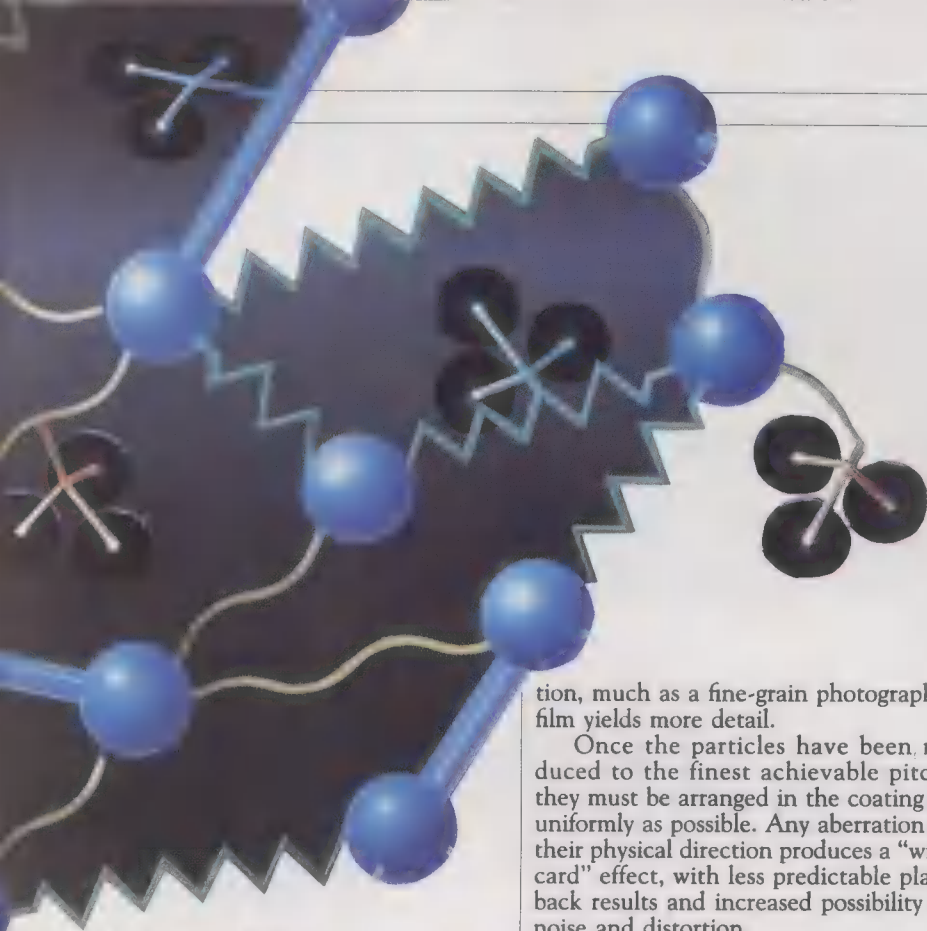


BY RON GOLDBERG

THE LAYERED LOOK

*New materials, coatings and
techniques propel blank tapes
to new levels of performance.*

Rules of Attraction: Gray magnetite particles in TDK tape are held in position by a binding agent (represented by blue bars and jagged and wavy lines) designed to create a strong, elastic web.



A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. And in the past decade, each link in the video chain has been strengthened. Radical advances like high-band video have dramatically improved the recording side, while VCRs with super-accurate digital tracking and high-resolution monitors have buttressed the playback side. But between these two pillars lies perhaps the most critical link in the chain—the place where all the video and audio information is captured, stored and retrieved. Naturally, we're talking about videotape.

Tape has had its hands full in keeping up with other advances in video hardware. Conceptually, little has changed—blank videotape is still essentially a strip of plastic film (the base) coated with magnetic particles, which are attached to the base by way of an adhesive substance called the binder. When video and audio signals are fed to the tape, the magnetic particles are electronically arranged in a pattern that corresponds to the incoming information. The tape's basic job is twofold: Capture as much of the information as possible, and store it in an accurate and dependable way for playback.

Easier said than done. In order to glean as much signal as possible, the magnetic particles have to be microscopic—anywhere from 0.14 to 0.2 microns (or millionths of a meter) is typical. The smaller the particle, the finer the resolution of incoming informa-

tion, much as a fine-grain photographic film yields more detail.

Once the particles have been reduced to the finest achievable pitch, they must be arranged in the coating as uniformly as possible. Any aberration in their physical direction produces a "wild card" effect, with less predictable playback results and increased possibility of noise and distortion.

Even if all these qualities have been met, the job is still only half done, because the tape has to remain true to this "captured" state as long and unerringly as it can. This means staying within these microscopic tolerances throughout repeated plays, rewinds and visual scans, even if the tape is left out on a sunny window ledge or used on a cold, rainy



Life Preserver: TDK tapes use a cobalt coating to enhance their stability.

day for a camcorder shoot.

As you can see, the job is a daunting one, but tape manufacturers have risen to the challenge. Recent advances have resulted in increased picture resolution and more reliable performance. And since recording and playback can only be as good as the tape they rely on, these refinements are just as profound as the sexiest new hardware technologies. The progress in blank tape technology has occurred in several key areas, each geared toward a specific aspect of tape

performance. Taken as a whole, they have led to a new generation of blank tapes that represents a substantial leap forward in the state of the art.

PARTICLE THEORY

The most essential building blocks of any magnetic media are the actual magnetic particles that store the incoming signals. In VHS tape, these particles have traditionally been made of a chemical compound called gamma ferric oxide, also referred to as maghemite. It consists primarily of iron, which has excellent magnetic properties.

Years ago, tape manufacturers hit on the idea of using magnetite, a crystal-like particle with better magnetic properties. The problem was that magnetite is especially susceptible to oxidation—known to the rest of us as rusting. When magnetite oxidizes, it evolves into a compound with non-magnetic properties, a disaster for long-term tape use and storage.

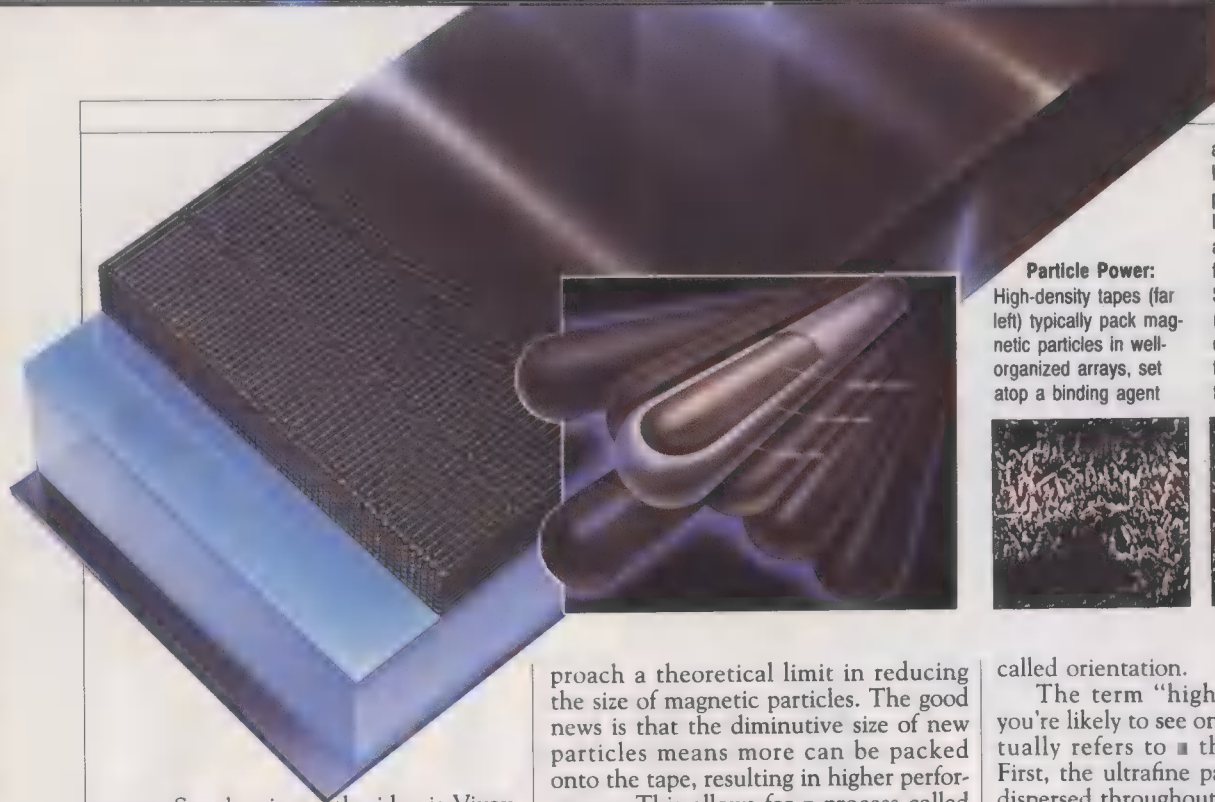
The challenge was to develop some way of using magnetite particles while enhancing their stability. The answer came in the form of cobalt, an element noted for stability. Manufacturers discovered a way to coat magnetite crystals with cobalt, which let them harness the superior magnetic saturation of magnetite with little worry of eventual degradation.

They were also able to use more particles on the tape. That's because traditional tape formulas needed a shading agent to physically darken the tape. Darkening is required for two reasons:

First, VCRs use an optical sensor to determine the difference between the tape and the clear leader at the beginning or end of the tape. More important, lighter-colored tape particles raise transmission levels. In other words, they require more signal strength to reproduce accurate video signals. But these

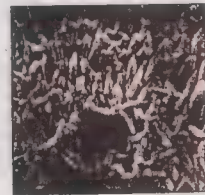
shading agents left less room for magnetic particles. Since cobalt-enhanced magnetite is dark already, no shading agent is necessary, leaving more room to squeeze particles onto the tape.

Virtually all tape manufacturers now use some form of this substantial step forward, although the technology goes under numerous monikers. Maxell calls its formula Black Magnetite, which is available in both VHS and S-VHS. JVC offers High Energy Magnetite on its editing, library and A/V master cas-



Particle Power: High-density tapes (far left) typically pack magnetic particles in well-organized arrays, set atop a binding agent

and a base film, JVC's High Energy Magnetite particles (left) illustrate how a cobalt coating is applied, while the surface of Fuji's new Super VHS PRO tape (below, left) shows a denser particle pattern than its earlier PRO-S tape (below, right).



ettes. Sony's spin on the idea is Vivax, which goes into the company's V series of cassettes. TDK's new Sound and Color line uses what the company calls Avifine particles. Scotch employs the refinement in its Black Watch series, available in high-grade, pro and S-VHS versions.

ORIENTATION FOR FRESHMEN

Through continual development, tape manufacturers have begun to ap-

proach a theoretical limit in reducing the size of magnetic particles. The good news is that the diminutive size of new particles means more can be packed onto the tape, resulting in higher performance. This allows for a process called high-density packing, which was pioneered by Sony and soon adopted by others.

Unfortunately, one problem solved is often another problem created. In this case, it was how to disperse ultrafine particles into the most efficient arrangement. To produce the most effective and dependable results, particles must be aligned as uniformly as possible. The final physical pattern they fall into is

called orientation.

The term "high-packing," which you're likely to see on tape packages, actually refers to a three-step process. First, the ultrafine particles are densely dispersed throughout the tape's coating, which includes the adhesive binder. Then they pass through a magnetic field, which lines the particles up in as straight a row as possible. Finally, the surface of the coating is smoothed out by a process called calendaring. This ensures that the tape surface carries no bumps or other irregularities that would result in dropouts.

Nothing about this procedure is inherently new. In fact, it's basically the way videotape has been made from the start. However, the development of ultrafine particles has spurred advances in each of the three manufacturing steps. For one thing, there can be a higher ratio of actual magnetic substance mixed into the binder. Manufacturers now routinely disperse the magnetic particles more than once into the mix, allowing several times the magnetic density that older tape formulas provided.

Since there are more particles, the orientation process had to be improved as well. A typical technique now used is called double orientation. This works like a magnetic version of the twin-blade razor, where a whisker is mostly cut by a first blade, while a second blade takes care of whatever remains.

In double orientation, the tape coating first passes through a single magnetic field, which orients most particles in the required direction. Later, a second magnetic field aligns any particles that might have escaped the first orientation. Since there are so many particles in a high-packed tape, the extra step is necessary. Finally, the tape is calendared using up-to-the-minute techniques, like high temperatures, high pressure and multi-

Tale Of The Tapes



Most major tape manufacturers have introduced new formulations which take advantage of recent breakthroughs in tape technology. Collectively, they add up to a substantial elevation in picture resolution, sound reproduction and reliability. Here's a look at who's using what:

- **Maxell:** VX, HGX Black, RX-PRO and XR-S. Each tape features the company's Black Magnetite particles. The HGX Black and XR-S tapes also feature a special backcoat for smoother tape handling.

- **TDK:** HS, EHG, Hi-Fi, HD-X Pro. These tapes use an update of the company's cobalt-treated Super Avilyn formula called Super Avilyn Plus. Longer-length HS and EHG tapes use a PEN-type base the company calls PX.

- **Fuji:** S-VHS Pro, A/V Master, A/V Pro. Fuji has been especially active with double-coating. Each tape uses this technique, as well as double orientation. Each comes with a plastic library case.

- **Sony:** V. Sony's tape philosophy is based on high-packing technology. V tapes offer the company's new Vivax particles and a special orientation technique which lines the particles up in a V pattern.

- **JVC:** S-XZ, S-XG, EHG, Pro HF, SX. Each of these formulations features the company's High-Energy Magnetite, resulting in a 10- to 22-percent improvement in overall magnetic energy compared to previous offerings.

- **Scotch:** Premium VHS, Hi Pro VHS, S-VHS. These entries in the company's Black Watch series incorporate cobalt-enhanced magnetite and a special anti-static treatment on the leader and backcoating.

—RG

continued on page 94



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Circle 6 on Reader Service Card



BY FRANK BEACHAM

SHOCK OF THE NEW

HDTV and a flurry of hot products jolt video professionals with a vision of rapid change.

If ever there was any doubt 1992 would be a tumultuous year for television, it ended at NAB '92, the huge technology exposition for TV professionals. More than 50,000 broadcasters and video production executives descended on Las Vegas recently for the annual gathering of the National Association of Broadcasters. NAB is to professionals what CES is to video consumers. An annual visit here gives video's movers and shakers a clear view of the future of their business, and of powerful new products coming on the horizon.

But this spring's convention was one to remember. It began only hours after the Federal Communications Commission issued a death sentence for television as we know it: an ambitious calendar for converting the country to high-definition TV reception. What began as a case of future shock for many professionals ended in confusion as veteran production chiefs struggled to come to terms with some of the same difficult TV technology issues consumers will soon be asked to face.

The events at NAB are important to video consumers because the technologies the industry embraces (or rejects) influence, sometimes *determine* what we see in our living rooms over the next few years. This year, the technology under the microscope was HDTV, and the FCC gave the TV industry plenty to talk about. The commission proposed that once it selects a new HDTV transmission standard (probably next year), broadcasters should have only five years

Two-Way Tube:
Sony's 34-inch wide-screen, high-definition Trinitron monitor displays images from either HDTV or NTSC sources.



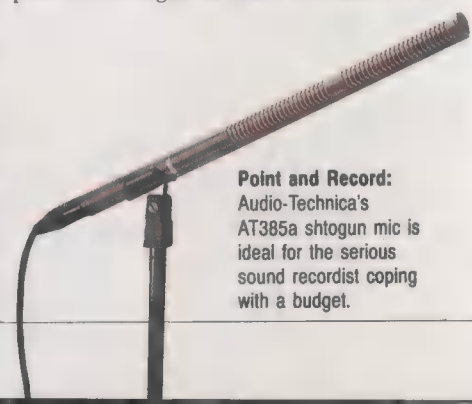
to air HDTV programs. Those failing to do so may lose the precious HDTV channel the FCC plans to give each broadcaster. Should the FCC's proposal stand, HDTV broadcasting could be in full swing by 1998.

Once HDTV broadcasting is under way, the FCC further proposes giving broadcasters 15 years to convert to full HDTV service. At that point, around 2008, the entire nation would be receiving HDTV signals and broadcasters would be required to return their current NTSC channels to the FCC.

These were fighting words to broadcasters who contend they are being forced into an expensive new technology without new sources of revenue. The FCC, on the other hand, thinks broadcasters had better get with it or they will be put out of business by more progressive video technologies. "There's

going to be a war over this," said Larry Thorpe, vice president of Sony Advanced Systems. "It's still a proposal and it's not nailed in concrete yet. But the FCC has thrown down the gauntlet. This is going to energize television."

Energize television it did. Suddenly talk at the convention about interim widescreen technologies using 16:9 aspect ratios began to fade. Instead, TV's

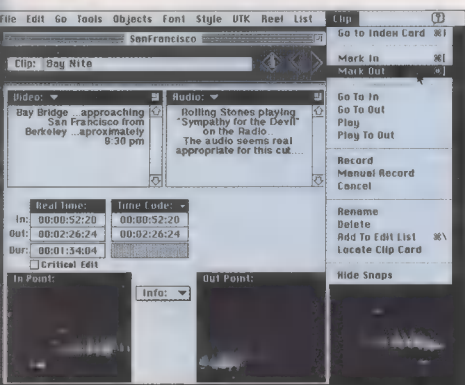


Point and Record:
Audio-Technica's AT385a shotgun mic is ideal for the serious sound recordist coping with a budget.





Into the Future: Video professionals cluster around Canon's booth at NAB (left), while a transparent, cutaway version of a Sony TV tube (above) comes in for close examination.



Edit Friendly: Abbate's inexpensive VideoToolkit lets Macintosh users visually monitor editing points.



Shoulder Pal: Sony's EVW-300 Hi8 camcorder combines top Hi8 features with broadcast-level resolution.



Muscle Deck: JVC's BR-S605UB S-VHS VCR moves the format more firmly into pro editing circles.

spin doctors started talking about how HDTV won't be as expensive as previously expected. Companies such as Sony, Toshiba and Zenith were talking about "cost-effective" consumer HDTV.

"HDTV is for real. Fifteen years from now it will dominate the airwaves," argued Jerry K. Pearlman, chairman of Zenith Electronics, as he tried to convince reluctant broadcasters to jump on the HDTV bandwagon. He predicted consumer HDTV sets will soon be available for about \$1,000 over conventional receivers.

Sony revealed a research project which could dramatically lower the cost of HDTV production equipment and home receivers. Thorpe, who is also a member of the committee advising the FCC on its choice of an HDTV standard, outlined Sony's scenario to lower HDTV costs for broadcasters and consumers. He suggested that broadcasters consider a scalable digital TV system that would allow them to use a less expensive version of a currently costly HDTV production standard. "Everybody has been hung up on line numbers and field rates," Thorpe said. "But now that we are thinking digital, that's no longer the issue. The issue is information content, not line numbers and field rates."

Noting that each of the three digital HDTV production systems before the FCC is based on a data stream greater than a gigabit (one billion bits per second). Thorpe said each of the proposed systems reduces that data stream to about 20 megabits. "If we are only transmitting 20 megabits when we are originating a gigabit," Thorpe asked, "is it necessary to begin with gigabits? I don't think so," he said, answering his own question.

A new scalable, data-rate HDTV broadcast system designed along these lines could compete in cost with proposed widescreen systems using a 525-line scan rate, Thorpe said. If this can be achieved, broadcasters could afford to implement HDTV quickly and avoid lower resolution systems in the interim.

The scalable TV principle would also apply to home receivers. "Initially HDTV will be expensive," Thorpe acknowledged. "But every manufacturer

continued on page 86

BUYER BEWARE

Fraudulent phone tricks can cost you money.

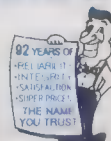
Phone fraud tip-offs.

Beware of phone sales tactics with these characteristics:

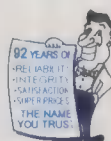
- overemphasizes free merchandise
 - unauthorized dealers
 - pressures you to buy before a deadline
- And remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.*

BUYERS GUIDE

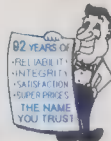
Q. Who can you call and give your credit card number to with confidence?



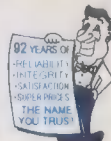
Q. Who is the world's largest camera, electronic and computer department store?



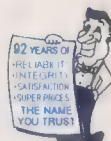
Q. Who has only factory fresh merchandise? Nothing Refurbished!



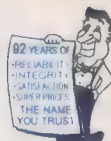
Q. Who has the largest selection of Direct Factory Authorized Brands?



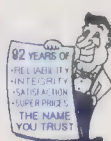
Q. Who can you call for experienced and knowledgeable sales staff?



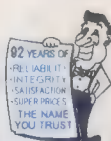
Q. Who guarantees you the lowest purchase price?



Q. Who can you call for prompt and speedy shipment?



Q. Who gives you a 10 day money back guarantee?



Q. They all come and go, but who has been here for 92 years?

ANSWER

TO FIND OUT WHO THIS 92 YEAR OLD RETAIL GIANT IS, TURN TO PAGE 52

Circle 7 on Reader Service Card.

DAWN OF A NEW DISH

Satellite video services promise new way to bring movies home.

DBS, the small-dish satellite service you've been hearing about for years, is on the verge of becoming a reality. A cluster of companies is bringing direct broadcasting from satellites (DBS) to the point where it can be enjoyed instead of merely anticipated. Boosters like Eddy Hartenstein, executive vice president of DirecTV, one of the forthcoming services, predict DBS will "do for video what the compact disc did for audio." It won't be long before viewers have the chance to judge for themselves.

There's nothing new about home satellite antennas—big dishes have been around since the late '70s. What DBS systems bring to the game is the promise of small, user-friendly dishes and manageable costs. But their appearance also raises issues of compatibility and copy protection that will only be resolved as the systems go online.

DBS systems promise 60 to 80 channels, filled mostly with pay-per-view movies, delivered to antennas only 18 to 36 inches in diameter, making them small enough to be easily mounted under the eaves of a home or on a city apartment balcony. Some backers see DBS as a supplement to cable TV service. Others consider it an alternative. Large-dish dealers argue that DBS is not a replacement for their wares because

Direct From Space: Decoder and remote control for SkyPix TV, due this summer, along with SkyPix's control screen (above) and movie selection screen (right).

the smaller antennas won't receive most of the channels their customers (and cable subscribers) already receive.

The heaviest hitter in the DBS league is DirecTV, a joint venture of Hughes Aerospace and the RCA division of Thomson Consumer Electronics. Beginning early in 1994, a new generation of high-powered Hughes satellites will begin beaming as many as 100 channels of programming to antenna/receiver systems made by RCA and expected to cost \$900 or less.

Hughes expects to fill at least 60 channels with pay-per-view movies, with a new film scheduled to start every few minutes. Other channels may be devoted to news, music videos and other popular genres. The programs will be supplied either by Hughes or Hubbard Broadcasting, a Minneapolis company that operates the All News Channel. But DirecTV is unlikely to carry such popular cable channels as ESPN, CNN or MTV because the cable industry, which owns parts or all of these channels, wants to reserve them for cable subscribers and owners of large dishes.

To achieve so many channels, DirecTV will harness a new technology, digital signal compression, to squeeze as many as 10 television channels into the spectrum space now occupied



Cable Challenger: DirecTV, due to begin early in 1994, will use a receiver and a small antenna, both made by RCA, to feed up to 60 movie channels into a conventional set.

Every Picture Tells a Story



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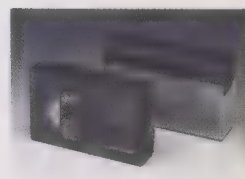
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by a single TV channel. Indeed, without digital compression, no DBS operator can hope to deliver the variety of programming necessary to compete with cable or conventional satellites, which explains why compression is an essential part of the business plan for every company talking about getting into the DBS business.

One of the talkers is SkyPix, which hopes to jump the gun by using an existing GTE satellite, SBS 6, to begin service this year. At presstime, SkyPix was uplinking 10 test channels, which it hopes to expand to 80 when its digital compression equipment arrives. TVN, a large-dish pay-per-view movie service partly owned by Hollywood movie studios, expects to do essentially the same thing when it moves to one of several new, more powerful satellites in a year or two. TVN will use the extra channels to shrink the waiting time for any movie start to less than 15 minutes.

There's more: PrimeStar, a cable-owned system aiming 10 channels at four-foot dishes using an older Hughes satellite, will increase its pay-per-view channels from two to as many as 60, although it's not clear exactly when. An Atlanta-based company called Brightside has ambitious plans to deliver a similar package of pay-per-view movies and golden-oldie TV programs late this year or early next year using a digital signal-compression system developed by Scientific-Atlanta.

Each system intends to operate as if it were in a vacuum. PrimeStar receivers, which must be leased from the company as part of the program package, won't pick up Brightside or DirecTV transmissions. Nor will theirs receive PrimeStar's. Each programmer deliberately has chosen a different compression system to confound video eavesdropping by unauthorized viewers.

Dishes will be fixed in place and pointed only at the satellite each is intended to receive, unlike today's steerable (and costlier) large antennas. As a result, DBS systems won't be able to deliver the 200-plus channels now available to large-dish owners. In fact, Thomson hopes big-dish owners will also buy a small dish and DirecTV antenna to provide the most of both worlds, according to Thomson executive vice president Joe Clayton.

How much will all this cost? Hardware is expected to range from DirecTV's do-it-yourself price of \$800 to \$1,100 or more for a custom-installed SkyPix system. The cost of leasing PrimeStar equipment will be included in a monthly subscription rate of about \$19.95. Program costs will vary. Pay-per-view movies are expected to run from \$3 to \$5, with no monthly charge. Sports

events and rock concerts are likely to range from as little as \$2.95 to \$35 or more. There's also likely to be a one-time access charge of some kind, and both TVN and SkyPix intend to ask for deposits up front.

Initially, most DBS suppliers thought they would get by on pay-per-view alone. But they're discovering subscribers want packages that look like popular cable offerings. This means including one or more superstations (PrimeStar now offers eight), a news channel, a sports channel, a music TV channel and so on. SkyPix and DirecTV expect to charge about \$11.95 per month for these advertiser-supported services, which may or may not be the same as those available by cable.

If you're a dyed-in-the-wool videophile, won't you end up subscribing to several or all of these services? Unlikely, says Esther Rodriguez, vice president of communications for General Instrument's VideoCipher Division. "There just aren't enough movies people are going to be willing to pay to see early to fill up all those channels," she explains. "They'll be sharing the same pool of movies as the pay-per-view channels and, while there's always somebody who hasn't seen *Citizen Kane* and wants to see it right now, I don't think there are enough of them for any one showing to make it pay."

To keep track of so many new channels, DBS operators plan to offer their own electronic program guides, complete with automatic VCR programming. All you need do is pick out a program and press a button on the remote control to send the necessary programming information to your VCR's memory. However, if the Hollywood studios have their way—and most DBS suppliers have no objection—you won't be able to timeshift movies or other pay-per-view events because they'll be copy-protected, with systems from either Macrovision or Eidak.

"Because the movies start every 15 minutes or so, there's no need for timeshifting," a spokesman for one DBS programmer earnestly insisted. "The only reason anyone would want to record a pay-per-view movie is to get around the copyright laws." One reason might well be that, having spent \$4.95 to watch, a viewer might be called away from home or get drowsy and decide to go to bed.

The argument in favor of Macrovision, according to TVN executive Stu Levin, is that if pay-per-view operators can convince the Hollywood studios their films are perfectly secure, they may be able to get titles more quickly—as soon as they're released for video rental,

continued on page 96

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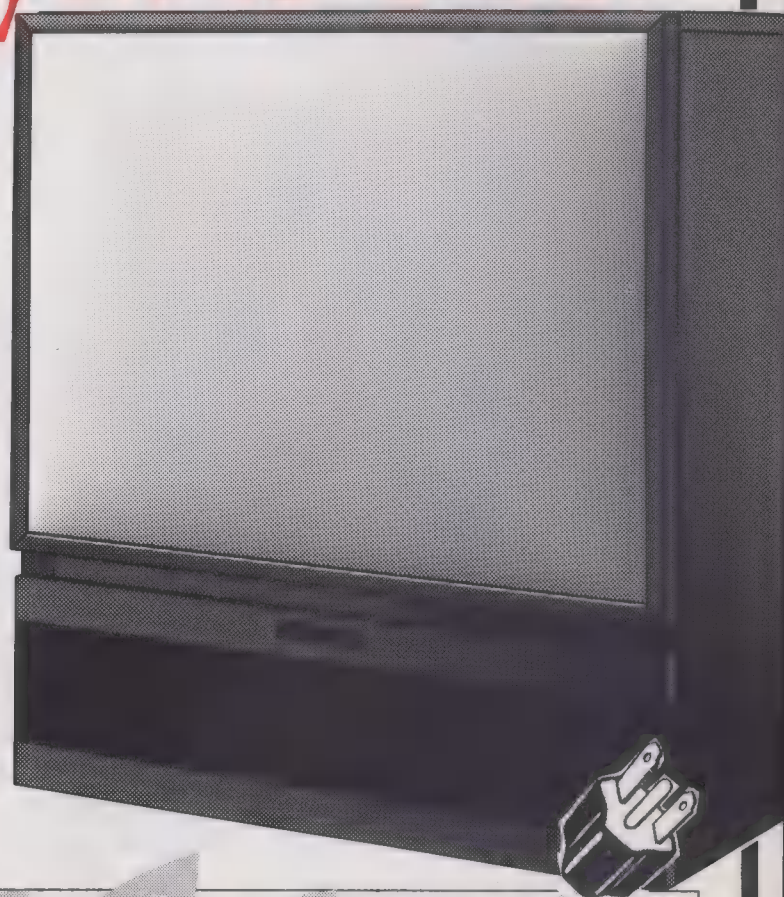
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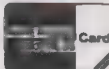
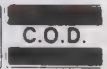
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R E L E A S E S



Two of a Kind:
Annette Bening and
Warren Beatty ignite
Bugsy.

FEATURE FILMS

Bugsy

1991. Warren Beatty, Annette Bening, Ben Kingsley; dir. Barry Levinson. Hi-fi surround, cc. (R) 135 min. priced for rental. Columbia TriStar.

Bugsy is a film of impeccable virtue in every area, down to the Ennio Morricone score and the Oscar-winning set and costume designs. Yet all of these accomplishments are overshadowed by Warren Beatty in his best role in years, as the New York mobster who turned Las Vegas from a desert outpost into the entertainment mecca of America.

The Bugsy Siegel of James Toback's

script is more dreamer than "businessman," as his mob partners like to call themselves. Sent to Los Angeles to take over the California rackets, Bugsy is star-struck by his introduction to Hollywood. A two-week trip turns into permanent relocation when he falls in love with Virginia Hill (Annette Bening), a tough cookie who already knows her way around gangsters.

Historians will dispute the accuracy of this depiction of one of America's most infamous criminals. But while *Bugsy* clearly romanticizes its subject, it doesn't whitewash him: Siegel's insanely violent side gives Beatty a chance to play unbridled rage for the first time onscreen.

This Bugsy is a man of extreme contradictions—violent but loving, elegant but ignorant, a visionary who couldn't

see his own world crumbling beneath him. Beatty, who has coasted on likable parts for too much of his career, shows that he can do more than charm an audience: Here it binds Bugsy's paradoxical traits into a three-dimensional character.

Bening is strong, but an underwritten character whose motivations are never clear holds her back. There are juicier parts for the supporting actors, particularly Ben Kingsley and Harvey Keitel (who were nominated for Oscars), and Elliott Gould (who should have been). Barry Levinson's direction shows the clear-eyed affinity for mid-century America that has characterized most of his work, from *Diner* to *Avalon*; if he's become typed as a director of period films, it's only because he's so good at it.

—M. Faust

EDITOR'S CHOICE

by

kenneth korman

JFK

1991. Kevin Costner, Tommy Lee Jones, Joe Pesci; dir. Oliver Stone. Hi-fi surround, cc. (R) 189 min. \$94.99 (2 cassettes). LD letterboxed \$39.98. Warner.

Few movies have ever been made with a more equal mix of passion and calculation than *JFK*. The calculation can be seen in casting Kevin Costner as Jim Garrison, the New Orleans D.A. who prosecuted local businessman Clay Shaw for the John F. Kennedy assassination. Costner is but a carrier for Oliver Stone's pet theory—that Kennedy was killed in a CIA-directed coup. But Costner's presence ensured that people would pay to listen, and that Stone could get the money to make the picture on the gigantic scale he required.

In its key sequences, *JFK* expands the techniques of propagandistic filmmaking. Stone and his Oscar-winning editors combine color, black-and-white and documentary footage into seamless units that seem to carry the authority of a multiplicity of viewpoints, with a sophistication that makes MTV look like home movies. These segments—all rearrangements of fact and/or speculation—are intended to show how Lee Harvey

Sutherland) about strange doings in the intelligence community. There seems to be little connection between the New Orleans and Washington stories, and a good deal of information about Oswald's own involvement has been omitted.

There are juicy character bits among the more than 100 speaking parts (including Tommy Lee Jones as Shaw); there are also stretches between those showcase sequences that are interminable. At least Stone keeps his arguments clear enough that you can accept or reject them on their own terms. He has returned the most traumatic event of our times back to public debate, and in the process shattered the image of the JFK theorists as a bunch of pathetic geeks. *JFK* is an important and valuable film. That does not necessarily mean it's a good one. —Sol Louis Siegel

Slacker

1991. Dir. Richard Linklater. Hi-fi mono. (R) 97 min. \$79.98. Orion.

Two young drunks discuss the socio-religious ramifications of Scooby-Doo and the Smurfs. A young woman tries to sell an extremely gross Madonna memento. A man pesters passers-by with conspiracy theories inspired by late-night sci-fi movies and the *Weekly World News*. A Kennedy assassination buff proposes his own book on the subject—*Conspiracy a Go-Go*.

These are just a few of the dozens of characters who wander in and out of *Slacker*, a buoyantly funny instant cult classic that plays like *My Dinner With Andre* featuring the cast of *Repo Man*.

Director Richard Linklater's long takes and fluid but unobtrusive camerawork evoke the lazy atmosphere these people live in. He takes us on a day-long tour of Austin, Texas, eavesdropping on students, drop-outs, hangers-on and hustlers. They yak about their enthusiasms and obsessions, have petty arguments with lovers and friends, and scheme to get by without a regular paycheck.

Slacker has its dull moments, but Linklater never stays with any character for too long before moving on. Be sure to stick around for the closing credits, in which the mostly unnamed characters are identified with such drolly terse synopses as "Handstamping Arm Licker," "Tura Satana Lookalike" and "Grocery Grabber of Death's Bounty." —MF

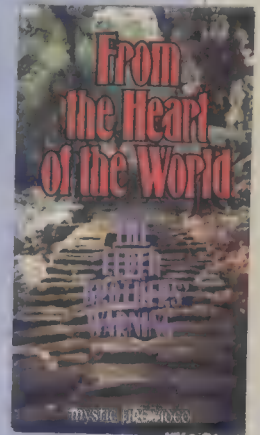
In summer, even a hardcore videophile's fancy turns to the great outdoors. But a little perspective may be just the thing before you head for that national park. Two current video releases inspire respect for our fragile world while shedding a little light on our changing place in it.

From the Heart of the World (Mystic Fire, \$29.95) takes us to Colombia's equatorial mountains, where after centuries of silence, the ancient Kogi tribe has

chosen to speak through filmmaker Alan Ereira. The Kogi landscape—which in one small area encompasses virtually every type of terrain on earth, from desert to arctic tundra—appears to be surviving. Until, that is, director Ereira takes us near the top of the mountain and shows why the Kogi

have come forward: The seldom-seen tundra, which supplies water to sustain the region's entire ecosystem, is dying from the environmental abuses of the outside world. Suddenly it's impossible to argue with the Kogi assertion that "the world is coming to an end," and that it's up to us to save it.

There's more than one way to illustrate man's humble place in the natural world, as proved by the hysterically funny **Cane Toads: An Unnatural History** (First Run Features, \$39.95). In an effort to ward off the cane grub, the Australian province of Queensland imported 102 supposedly predatory cane toads from Hawaii in 1935. These fat, ugly amphibians proved uninterested in sugar cane pests, but utterly spellbound by each other: They reproduce at an unbelievable rate and are now completing the "toadal conquest" of northern Australia. The Aussies have adapted to their unstoppable new friends, from keeping them as pets to boiling them down for the psychedelic drug in their skin. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em, but don't mess with Mother Nature unless you're willing to pay the price. ■



Lawyers, Guns and Money: Jim Garrison (Kevin Costner) tries to solve the mystery of the era in *JFK*.

Oswald was enmeshed with covert anti-Castro forces bankrolled by the CIA through Shaw, and how it was all but one component of a far-reaching conspiracy. The argument begins to fall apart after the long exposition by "X" (an amazing performance by Donald



Tele-a-lete: Robert De Niro and Nick Nolte face off in Martin Scorsese's chilling *Cape Fear*.

Cape Fear

1991. Robert De Niro, Jessica Lange, Nick Nolte; dir. Martin Scorsese. Hi-fi surround, cc. (R) 128 min. priced for rental. LD \$39.98. MCA/Universal.

Roll over Freddy Krueger and tell Leatherface the news: Max Cady is the baddest dude yet. Portrayed with zest by Robert De Niro, the villain of *Cape Fear* displays the relentlessness of a B-movie slasher, but he's even more sinister. Unlike the cartoon characters above, Cady is funny, believable (for a while, anyway) and perversely appealing, especially compared to the family he menaces.

Although you can't top the 1962 thriller of the same name, director Martin Scorsese casts this brutal remake in the idiosyncratic terms of his best films, pondering good and evil, damnation and salvation. When ex-con Cady arrives in a sleepy southern town to harass Sam Bowden (Nick Nolte), the lawyer who unsuccessfully defended him in a rape trial 14 years before, it looks like a case of hardened criminal versus upstanding citizen. In fact, the attorney suppressed evidence that might have exonerated his client, and the Bowden family is a powder keg. Sam and wife Leigh (Jessica Lange) are at each other's throats, while 15-year-old daughter Danielle (Juliette Lewis) is trouble waiting to happen.

The tension builds as Cady gets closer, but Max is so much more interesting than his prey—except for Danielle, who's drawn to the avenger—that it's hard to get caught up in the struggle. Eventually the director dispenses with logic and turns Cady into a virtual su-

perhuman, concluding with an outlandish yet disappointingly conventional showdown. Still, Scorsese buffs can appreciate some witty touches, from ultrasick humor to cameos by Robert Mitchum and Gregory Peck (who were in the original version of the film), even if *Cape Fear* ends up a smarter, slicker version of *Friday the 13th*. —Jon Young

Grand Canyon

1991. Kevin Kline, Danny Glover, Steve Martin; dir. Lawrence Kasdan. Hi-fi surround, cc. (R) 134 min. \$94.98. FoxVideo.

A mere suicide was sufficient to catalyze the marathon introspection and yuppie convergence of writer/director Lawrence Kasdan's *The Big Chill*. In *Grand Canyon*, Kasdan's latest effort, learning experiences are ladled out to the principal characters like servings from God's buffet. When well-to-do lawyer Mack (Kevin Kline) finds himself stranded in South Central Los Angeles, tow-truck operator Simon (Danny Glover) arrives just in time to talk a street gang out of doing some serious damage. Good luck or just good timing?



L.A. Story: Like all the characters in *Grand Canyon*, Davis (Steve Martin) and Mack (Kevin Kline) discuss the meaning of it all.

Mack's friend Davis (Steve Martin), who produces splatter films, is seriously maimed in a robbery attempt. Bad luck or cosmic justice? Meanwhile, out for her morning jog, Mack's wife Claire (Mary McDonnell) discovers an abandoned baby—the perfect buffer to the fact that Mack is teetering on the brink of an affair and that their teen-age son is starting to flutter from the nest. What has all this got to do with the Grand

Canyon? And how is Mack going to pay back Simon?

As Kasdan's characters mingle in and out of each other's life-altering experiences, two slightly more profound questions emerge: What's the difference between coincidence and divine intervention? And what's the proper way to say "thank you" for the latter? Some may find the answers in *Grand Canyon*, a lovely, frightening film that puts perspective in perspective. —John Walker

Europa Europa

1991. Marco Hofschneider, Julie Delpy; wr./dir. Agnieszka Holland. Hi-fi stereo, subtitled. (R) 115 min. \$79.98. Orion.

"To what extent the Jew takes over foreign culture," Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*, "can be seen from the fact that he is mostly found in the art which seems to require least original invention, the art of acting." Solomon Perel, a Jew in Hitler's Germany, has to be an actor every moment of his adolescence—not for a living but for his life. In a Russian orphanage, where he finds himself after fleeing the invasion of Poland, he

becomes the model Komsomol youth. Seized by the Nazis when they invade Russia, Solek passes himself off as "Josef Peters," a pure Aryan. Improbably, the deception works, and he finds himself a prize student in an elite Hitler Youth school.

This outlandish story is true, and in *Europa Europa*, 1991's finest movie, Agnieszka Holland tells it with nightmarish logic and dark comedy. The individual

events, from the chaos of battle to the Nazi teacher's espousal of racial myth as objective science (a scene as hilarious as it is scary), are as fantastic as the story itself. Solek adapts himself to party lines wherever he goes; his situation makes him the objective observer of a world gone mad.

The theme is not survival but identity—how Solek maintains ■ sense of who he is even when it can be fatal. Holland's use of dreams and recurring images continually underscores her protagonist's conflicting longings—for his lost family on the one hand and to be like "everyone else" on the other. The main obstacle to that, which he must always hide, is his circumcision, the indelible mark of his heritage.

This is actually what makes *Europa Europa* universal and not just another Holocaust tale. Solek is aware of playing roles, but the other teen-agers submit to whatever nonsense they have been taught and are doomed. "This," Holland tells us, "is how we make our children live." The question she leaves us to answer for ourselves is: why? —SLS

Truly, Madly, Deeply

1991. Alan Rickman, Juliet Stevenson; wr./dir. Anthony Minghella. Hi-fi surround, cc. (PG-13) 107 min. priced for rental. Buena Vista.

It would be impossible to talk about the splendid British film *Truly, Madly, Deeply* without noting that it bears more than ■ passing resemblance to *Ghost*. (Both films were made in 1990.) But where *Ghost* was a lightweight melange of genres designed for maximum audience manipulation, *Truly, Madly, Deeply* is a poignant comedy about the pain of loss and the need to move on.

Unable to get over the death of her lover Jamie (Alan Rickman), Nina (Juliet Stevenson) is granted her wish: She returns home from work one day to find him waiting for her. Though a ghost, he proves ■ sufficiently corporeal presence as the two make up for lost time. After a few weeks of bliss, though, things begin to settle down and Nina starts to question the reasons for Jamie's return.

Despite its fantastical premise, everything in *Truly, Madly, Deeply* rings true. The spiky Rickman and the wounded but resilient Stevenson make a perfect couple because of (rather than in



Back for More: Death can't stop Stevenson and Rickman from being *Truly, Madly, Deeply* in love.

spite of) their differences. Playwright Anthony Minghella, in his filmmaking debut, balances giddy romance with cool realism, painful emotions with quirky humor. He has made a little film to be cherished. —MF

Father of the Bride

1991. Steve Martin, Diane Keaton; dir. Charles Shyer. Hi-fi surround, cc. (PG-13) 105 min. priced for rental. Touchstone.

As soothing as a warm bath, *Father of the Bride* is genial retro fluff. This remake of the 1950 Spencer Tracy comedy could have been more than formula fun, thanks to the presence of Steve Martin in the title role of the anxious dad who reluctantly confronts the marriage of his beloved daughter (sweet Kimberly Williams), not to mention a mountain of wedding bills. However, our wild and crazy star gets few opportunities to display his antic gifts, being confined mostly to grimaces and eye-rolling.

Still, he fares better than Diane Keaton, whose one-dimensional part is ■ startling reminder of how few good jobs

exist for women of her "advanced" years. As the long-suffering wife, this talented actress spends the entire movie smiling patiently and reassuring her spouse everything will be okay. Amidst the blandness, Martin Short's bizarre supporting turn provides a desperately needed jolt of adrenalin. Playing an aggressively cheerful wedding coordinator, he jabbars in a hilarious, often incomprehensible accent that suggests Polish crossed with Japanese mixed with California hip. For ■ few moments, Short recaptures the edgy brilliance of his SCTV days, something he's usually failed to do in Hollywood. Fans of Steve Martin, however, should be advised that their hero covered similar ground more effectively in *Parenthood*. —JY

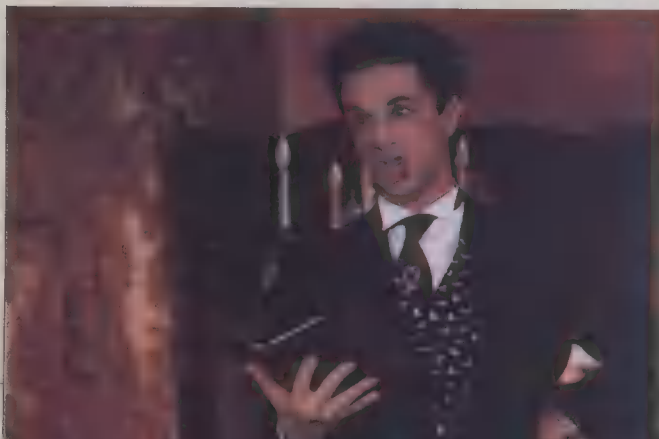
LASERDISCS

Citizen Kane

1941. Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore; dir. Welles. Digital mono. (NR) 119 min. Turner/Image Entertainment edition: CLV 2 sides, \$29.98. Criterion editions: CLV 2 sides, \$39.98; CAV 6 sides with supplement, \$99.98.

Here are three more additions to the growing list of laserdisc *Kanes*, which is now up to ■ grand total of six. All the latest reissues are newsworthy; the Turner/Image offering is the most economical way yet to add this must-have to any collection, while Criterion offers two outstanding new editions: One is ■ lavish CAV update with expanded supplemental materials, the other ■ medium-priced CLV.

Although the Turner folks seem to have taken great pains to clean up scratches from the source material (even



Nuptial Nightmare: Martin Short takes the cake as *Father of the Bride's* wacky wedding coordinator.

at the expense of a jumped frame or two), the picture quality of the Image disc is only passable compared to that of the Criterion, which is absolutely magnificent. In addition to a breathtaking transfer, the deluxe model also features (among other things) an early short called *Hearts of Age* that Welles made as a drama student and a 70-minute interactive documentary called *The Legacy of Citizen Kane*, featuring interviews with 35 directors, technicians and Kane collaborators.



Multiple Choice: Three new laserdisc editions of Welles' masterpiece should keep *Kane* buffs happy.

The Image disc offers two separate soundtracks. The digital tracks are Dolby-quieted monaural, while the more listenable analog tracks are the original, unenhanced mono. Both are superior to the Criterion's audio, which seems to have been mastered at too hot a level and overloads noticeably in several scenes.

If you like *Citizen Kane*, you'll be happy with the Image disc. If you love it, go for one of the new Criterion, even with the occasional audio blemish.

—Ron Goldberg



Cocktail Hours: *Virginia Woolf's* cast empties its souls and several bottles in one lengthy soiree.

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

1966. B&W. Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Sandy Dennis, George Segal; dir. Mike Nichols. Digital mono, letterboxed. (NR) 129 min. Side 3 CAV. \$39.98. Warner.

Days of Wine and Roses

1962. B&W. Jack Lemmon, Lee Remick; dir. Blake Edwards. Digital mono. (NR) 118 min. CLV 2 sides. \$39.98. Warner.

Mike Nichols' big-screen version of Edward Albee's play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is surely one of the most brilliantly acted films ever made. An evening with George and Martha (Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor) turns into hours of psychological torment for the film's other couple, played by George Segal and Sandy Dennis—not to mention George and Martha themselves. The film is vicious, sad, hilarious and astonishing. The language from Albee's play was retained, forever altering Hollywood's definition of permissible verbiage. Haskell Wexler's cinematography is another element that pushes the film near perfection.

This reissue adds the widescreen format, a CAV side three, the theatrical trailer and a few minutes of exit music. The letterboxing is slight and the bars disappear with the black-and-white film. *Virginia Woolf* begs for a Criterion-style supplement, with commentary from Albee, Nichols, Taylor, et al. In the meantime, this version works just fine.

Days of Wine and Roses began as a teleplay written for the 1958-59 season of CBS' *Playhouse 90*. It's an honest, straightforward account of a married couple's (Jack Lemmon and Lee Re-

mick) growing attachment to alcohol. The scene in which Lemmon destroys a greenhouse looking for a previously stashed bottle will make you squirm, although not as much as he does later in a straitjacket. It's a tame film that shows its age, but at least it deals intelligently with its subject matter.

—Brian Clark

The Sundowners

1960. Deborah Kerr, Robert Mitchum, Peter Ustinov; dir. Fred Zinnemann. Digital mono. (NR) 133 min. plus trailer. Side 3 CAV. \$39.98. Warner.

This episodic tale of a roving family



Family Fare: Deborah Kerr hits the trail in *The Sundowners*, filmed on location in Australia.

of sheep drovers in the 1920s is lively, humorous and generous in spirit. It also has terrific set pieces—brawls, horse races, a shearing contest and more—as well as great scenery and all sorts of animal stunts. The cast is good enough to make us forgive that they're not natives, and we can almost ignore Robert Mitchum's attempt at an accent. And though labeled (accurately) as a "Family Classic," it's sexier than most modern movies.

The digital transfer is brighter, if not sharper, than the tape. There are lots of chapter stops, as well as a CAV third side for the racing scenes and the theatrical trailer. It's a nice presentation for a movie that's old-fashioned in the best sense of the term.

—SLS

Witness for the Prosecution

1957. B&W. Charles Laughton, Tyrone Power, Marlene Dietrich; dir. Billy Wilder. Digital mono, letterboxed. (NR) 116 min. CLV 2 sides. \$34.98. MGM/UA.

When United Artists adapted Agatha Christie's *Witness for the Prosecution* for the big screen, guests to the set were asked to sign a pledge "promising not to reveal any of the secrets relating to the electrifying climax." Burt Lancaster, Noel Coward, William Holden, Hedda Hopper and other bigwigs dutifully took the oath—and cemented the film's main selling point, a plot with twists to match a roller coaster's.

Leonard Vole (Tyrone Power), amiable but shiftless, befriends a wealthy widow—then becomes the prime suspect in her murder. His barrister, Sir Wilfrid (Charles Laughton), is recovering from a heart attack, his ability to withstand the pressures questionable. To add to the suspense, Vole's wife (Marlene Dietrich) is called to testify not in his defense, but as a witness for the prosecution.

Laughton shares a wickedly delightful chemistry with wife Elsa Lanchester, who plays Sir Wilfrid's nurse. While she's warbling orders in the second person, he's threatening to plunge a thermometer between her shoulder blades. But Dietrich turns in the best performance as the multifaceted Christine—even in a gratuitous flashback (not in Dame Agatha's short story or play) showcasing her singing and her gams.

Picture quality is good on this letterboxed disc, which shows a nice use of the wide screen, especially in frames composed with three people.

—April P. Bernard



Burning Sand: Agnes Ayres and Rudolph Valentino are even hotter than their desert surroundings in 1921's *The Sheik*.

Valentino) and the headstrong Lady Diana Mayo (Agnes Ayres) in *The Sheik*, the silent that ignited Valentino's career—as well as the passions of female moviegoers. Though campy today with its melodramatic excesses, *The Sheik* still shows why Valentino became a legend: He was born to smolder (but appears slightly deranged when he smiles). The print looks 70 years old, but those scratches actually add to the nostalgic fun of watching this Harlequin romance set in "Mohammed's land." Roger Bellon's score, from 1987, is weirdly dramatic; you'll either love it or hate it. And if you don't know what "vivisection" means, look it up. It actually appears in the title cards!

—APB

mostly with middle-class families in their most prosaic crises. His films seem nothing more than a succession of ordinary events—until you realize that he has stripped away everything between the audience and the emotional lives of his characters. In his great *Tokyo Story* (1953) and *Early Summer* (1951), both available on tape, the effect is emotionally overwhelming.

New Yorker now brings us a pair of late Ozus. *Equinox Flower*, Ozu's first color film, is simply lovely. An executive's daughter rejects her arranged suitor for one of her own choosing; the resulting rift is illuminated with subtle, gentle humor throughout, and fleshed out with telling supporting characters. Ozu's great theme, that life is beautiful even when it disappoints us, was never better illustrated. The colors glow, and so does the picture.

An Autumn Afternoon, Ozu's last film, reworks the basic idea of his *Late Spring* (1949), in which a widower (the wonderful Chishu Ryu in both films) pushes his daughter into marriage so she won't waste her life caring for him. The late film is more complex; it shows us some of the ways in which Japanese family life deteriorated in the postwar period, which invests the story with a different kind of poignancy.

These two films, and the others cited here, are urgently recommended.

—SLS

Equinox Flower

1958. Shin Sabrui, Kinuyo Arima; dir. Yasujiro Ozu. Hi-fi mono, subtitled. (NR) 118 min. \$69.95. New Yorker.

An Autumn Afternoon

1962. B&W. Chishu Ryu, Shima Iwashita; dir. Ozu. Hi-fi mono, subtitled. (NR) 112 min. \$69.95. New Yorker.

No great film artist has hewn to a vision more limited than that of Yasujiro Ozu. Technically, it is distinguished by the famous "Ozu shot," the long take from the vantage of someone seated at tatami level. Thematically, he deals

CLASSICS

The Sheik

1921. B&W. Rudolph Valentino, Agnes Ayres, Adolphe Menjou; dir. George Melford. Silent with musical accompaniment in hi-fi stereo. (NR) 79 min. VHS, Beta \$19.95. Paramount.

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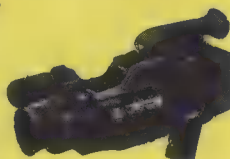


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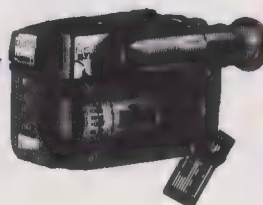
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Ice Queen:
In Albertville, Kristi Yamaguchi became the first American woman to win a gold medal for figure skating in 16 years.

SPECIAL INTEREST

1992 Winter Olympics Highlights 1992 Winter Olympics Figure Skating

1992. Pr. Allan Brum and David Stern. Hi-fi stereo. 63 min. each. \$19.98 each. Limited-edition set \$34.98. CBS/Fox.

For those who didn't bother to set their VCRs during the Olympics and later wished they had captured the performances of Alberto Tomba, Bonnie Blair or Kristi Yamaguchi, 1992 *Winter Olympic Highlights* provides an intriguingly fast-paced (if ethnocentric) look at the events of the two-week-long Albertville Games. In little more than an hour, narrators Tim McCarver and Paula Zahn whip through practically every event, with the exception of the biathlon. Naturally, the results of the American athletes are highlighted, good and bad.

Many will find the *Figure Skating* cassette far more engrossing. Also a little more than an hour long, it shows more than a half-dozen complete performances—many by non-Americans. Not even Katarina Witt's fractured English and patently "obvious" observations can break the spell of, say, the pairs team of Mishkutenok and Dmitriev.

Fast-forward alert: CBS's Olympics coverage wouldn't be complete without Lee Iacocca, the man whose commercials dominated the Olympics in a way that athletes can only dream of. He shows up on the beginning of the gener-

al highlights tape in an extended Chrysler commercial; the figure skating tape begins with a spot for Bausch & Lomb. A minor annoyance, but an annoyance nonetheless.

—Lorraine Cademartori

Rock Guitar: A Guide From the Greats

1991. Richard Thompson, Ron Wood; dir. Simon Milne. Hi-fi stereo. 60 min. \$24.95. Shanachie Records, 37 E. Clinton St., Newton, NJ 07860.

As the market for video guitar schooling gets more and more specialized ("Playing With Your Teeth in F Sharp Minor, Vol. 6: The Molars"), it's refreshing to see a tutorial that doesn't pretend to be any more than an elementary-level "open house." Granted, one look at the faculty for *Rock Guitar* tells you that this video wasn't made yesterday—Richard Thompson has hair, Ron



One of a Kind:
Richard Thompson shares the secrets of his unique playing style on *Rock Guitar*.

Wood has yet to see rehab, and Michael Schenker is considered the epitome of heavy metal—but what *Rock Guitar* aims to do is simply demonstrate random elements of the instrument. Thompson humbly whips through a variety of tunings and picking styles for both acoustic and electric guitar, Professor Wood fumbles through some Chuck Berry and old Stones riffs, Schenker runs through a catalog of arena-rock clichés, and all demonstrate their favorite gadgets and effects. Reinforcing the program are stock clips of everyone from Hendrix and Les Paul to Chuck Berry and Buddy Guy.

Rock Guitar is geared less to teach than to inspire. But if you can't find anything to inspire you on this tape, might I suggest pottery?

—JW

K I D V I D

The Rory Story

1992. Rory. 55 min. \$14.98. Sony Kids' Video. Ages 5-10.

This flagship offering from the new Sony Kids' Video line is a gentle musical comedy with strong production values, 10 songs and endearing characters. If only Rory could become one of the latter, she'd have it made.

An amiable musician with a wide-eyed manner, Rory is fast gaining on Raffi and Sharon, Lois & Bram as a purveyor of quality kidrock, an energetic soft rock mix that won't send parents scrambling to unplug the family stereo. Unlike other one-named pop stars (Madonna, Cher, et al.), however, Rory doesn't have a personality to match her marketing push. She wears that frightening cultist smile that often infects children's performers, and her persona is insufferably perky, wholesome and pure. Her fictional rival, punkster Stinky Sox, is infinitely more fun to watch singing songs like "Because I Said So."

This lively show, originally broadcast on the Disney Channel, often recalls the Muppets' old TV series with its backstage intrigues, Henson-like puppets and showbiz puns. *The Rory Story* provides genuine laughs. But Rory herself, who insists on singing songs like "I'm Just a Kid," would be more fun if she'd just act up a little, or at least act her age.

—Marianne Meyer

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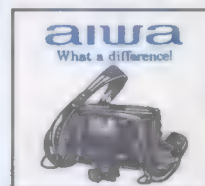
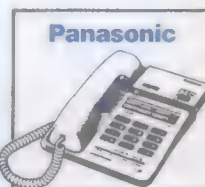
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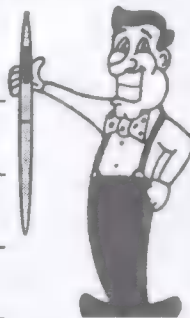
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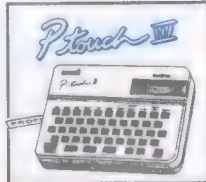
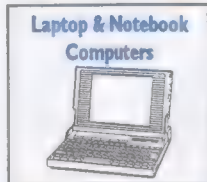
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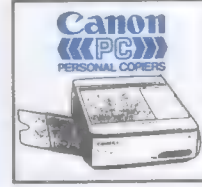
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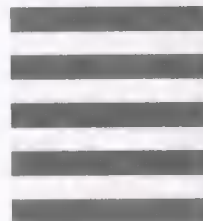
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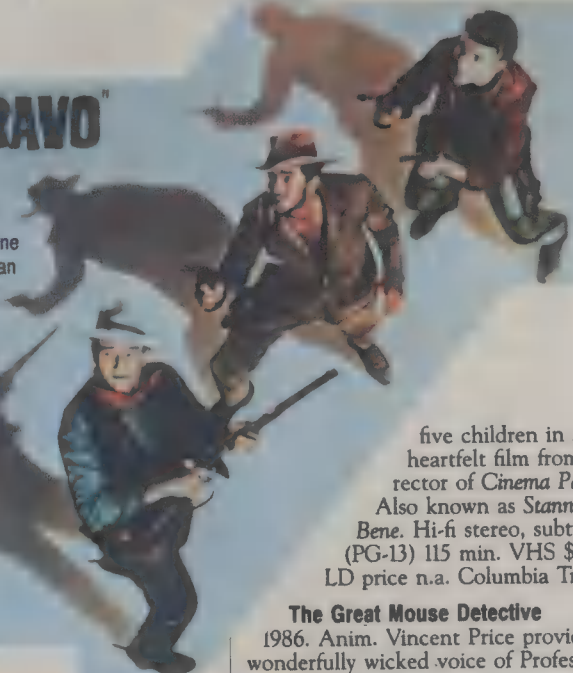
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The Law Around Here: Sheriff John Wayne with deputies Dean Martin and Ricky Nelson.



five children in another heartfelt film from the director of *Cinema Paradiso*. Also known as *Stanno Tutti Bene*. Hi-fi stereo, subtitled. (PG-13) 115 min. VHS \$89.95. LD price n.a. Columbia TriStar.

The Great Mouse Detective

1986. Anim. Vincent Price provides the wonderfully wicked voice of Professor Ratigan, nemesis of the title character, Basil of Baker Street. Hi-fi surround, cc. (G) 74 min. VHS, Beta \$24.99. Walt Disney.

Naked Lunch

1991. Peter Weller, Judy Davis, Julian Sands; wr./dir. David Cronenberg. Hallucinatory adaptation of William S. Burroughs' 1959 novel, guided by the director who stunned audiences with *The Fly* and

Dead Ringers. Hi-fi stereo, cc. (R) 115 min. VHS, Beta \$94.98. LD \$39.98. FoxVideo.

The Raven

1943. Pierre Fresnay, Pierre Larquey; dir. Henri-Georges Clouzot. From the masterful director of *Diabolique* and *Wages of Fear*: Poison pen letters whip a small town into a frenzy. Mono, subtitled. (NR) 91 min. VHS, Beta \$39.95. Interama.

Rawhide

1959-66. B&W. Guest stars like Barbara Stanwyck, Buddy Ebsen and James Coburn rode alongside regulars Clint Eastwood and Eric Fleming (along with many uncredited cattle) on this CBS western series. Mono. 2 episodes per volume, 120 min. each. Vol. 1, \$4.95. Subsequent volumes, \$19.95 each. Columbia House (800-638-2922).

Rio Bravo

1959. John Wayne, Dean Martin, Angie Dickinson, Ricky Nelson, Walter Brennan; dir. Howard Hawks. Classic western: Sheriff and his ragtag deputies guard a murderer. With trailer. Digital mono. (NR) 141 min. Side 3 CAV. LD \$39.98. Warner.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

The Addams Family

1991. Anjelica Huston, Raul Julia, Christopher Lloyd; dir. Barry Sonnenfeld. The best: Wednesday's deadpan delivery. The worst: Hammer's "Addams Groove." Hi-fi surround, cc. (PG-13) 102 min. VHS, Beta priced for rental. LD (letterboxed or pan-and-scan) \$34.95. Paramount.

The Ballad of the Sad Cafe

1991. Vanessa Redgrave, Keith Carradine, Rod Steiger; dir. Simon Callow. An Ismail Merchant production, with the always-strong Redgrave as a sour small-town woman transformed, but made vulnerable, by love. Hi-fi surround. (PG-13) 100 min. VHS \$89.95. LD \$34.95. SVS/Triumph.

The Connery Collection

1962/1963/1964. 007 in a box: Sean Connery opened the Bond series with *Dr. No*, *Goldfinger* and *From Russia With Love*. Digital stereo, letterboxed, cc. (PG) 340 min. CLV 6 sides. LD \$69.98. MGM/UA.

Elvis: The Lost Performances

1992 comp. The King isn't gone—he was just hiding. Recently unearthed in MGM's film vault: outtakes from *Elvis: That's the Way It Is* and *Elvis on Tour*. Hi-fi stereo. 60 min. VHS, Beta \$19.98. MGM/UA.

Deliverance

1972. Burt Reynolds, Jon Voight, Ned Beatty, Ronny Cox; dir. John Boorman. Powerful thriller: Weekend canoe trip for four Atlanta buddies turns into a backwoods nightmare. With trailer. Digital mono, letterboxed, cc. (R) 109 min. LD \$34.98. Warner.

Everybody's Fine

1991. Marcello Mastroianni; dir. Giuseppe Tornatore. A Sicilian patriarch visits his

Labels For Less

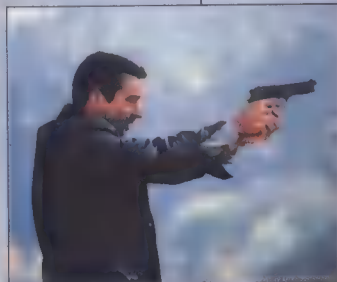
Everyone needs a little Misery in his life. Now the Stephen King thriller is available for \$19.95 from New Line. Also just under \$20: Joan Crawford classics *The Women* and *Our Dancing Daughters* from MGM/UA; *Bird on a Wire* and *Midnight Run* from MCA/Universal; Paramount's *The Two Jakes*; *Defending Your Life* from Warner; and Columbia TriStar's *The Krays* and *Men of Respect*.

In the neighborhood of \$15: *Cocoon*, *The War of the Roses*, *Nine to Five* and *Take the Money and Run* from FoxVideo; *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* from MCA/Universal; *State of Grace* and *Navy SEALs* from Orion; and a slew of MGM/UA action/adventurers with Bronson, Norris, Van Damme and more.

Though Elvis' prison uniform is black-and-white, *Jailhouse Rock* is now colorized, \$19.98 from MGM/UA... Cabin Fever's popular western *Lonesome Dove* is available in two or four volumes for \$39.95, while an EP-speed single volume retails for \$19.95... Twelve restored Republic silents are being re-released at \$19.98... FoxVideo is packaging *Alien* and *Aliens* with a documentary on the making of the third installment, all for

\$39.98... Four Goldwyn Classics from HBO—*Bulldog Drummond*, *Dead End*, *The Real Glory* and *Ball of Fire*—have been remastered for surround... The one-armed man resurfaces: Worldvision is offering the conclusion of *The Fugitive* TV series, "The Final Judgment," for \$9.98... On *Blade Runner*'s 10th anniversary, check out a \$14.95 New Line special edition of the uncut version.

—APB



Robert De Niro in *Midnight Run*



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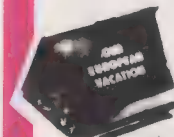
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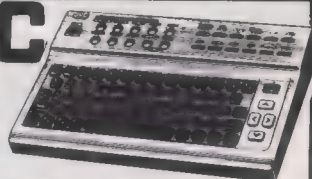
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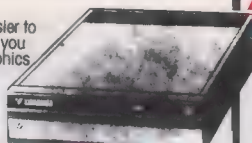
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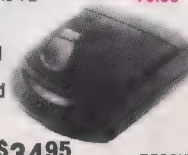
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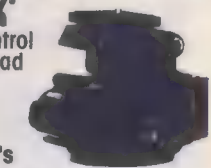
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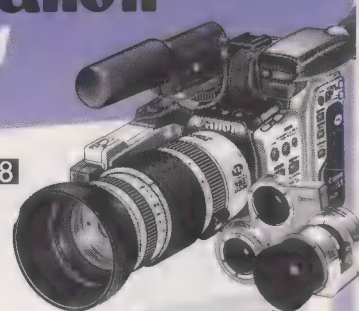


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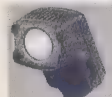
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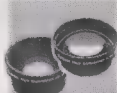
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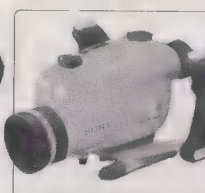
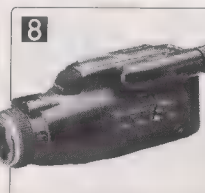
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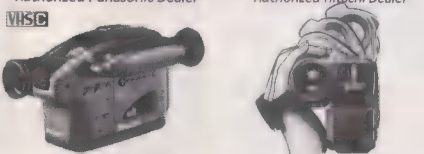
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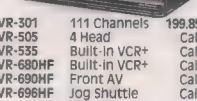
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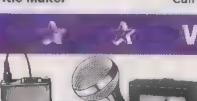
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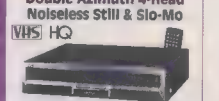
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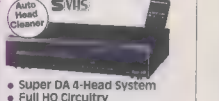
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1937. B&W. Katharine Hepburn, Ginger Rogers, Adolphe Menjou; dir. Gregory La Cava. Up-and-comers Ann Miller, Lucille Ball and Eve Arden room in the same boarding house with rich girl Hepburn—all hoping for that "big break." From the lively Edna Ferber-George S. Kaufman play. Digital mono. (NR) 91 min. LD \$29.95. Image.

Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country

1991. William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley; dir. Nicholas Meyer. Absolutely, positively, unequivocally the last one. Maybe. With two minutes of footage not seen in theaters. Hi-fi surround, cc. (PG) 110 min. VHS, Beta priced for rental. LD (letterboxed or pan-and-scan) \$34.95. Paramount.

Tales of Hoffman

1951. Moira Shearer, Robert Helpmann, Robert Rounseville; dirs. Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger. Adaptation of Jacques Offenbach's opera, a trio of fantasies from the mind of the poet and student Hoffman, with some of the performing arts' community's most talented. Stereo. (NR) 138 min. VHS only, \$39.95. Voyager/Criterion LD upcoming. Home Vision.

This Is Spinal Tap

1984. Michael McKean, Christopher Guest, Harry Shearer, Rob Reiner; dir. Reiner. "Collector's edition" of the rockumentary that turns it up to 11. Includes video for "Bitch School" (it's about dogs) from the band's new album, *Break Like the Wind*. Stereo. (R) 93 min. VHS only, \$14.95. New Line.

COMEDY

Black Lizard

1968. Akihiro Maruyama; dir. Kinji Fukasaku. Campy entertainment: Notorious Japanese jewel thief (played by a female impersonator) meets her match—in love and crime—in a detective. Mono, subtitled, letterboxed. (NR) 86 min. VHS, Beta \$79.95. Cinevista.

Kuffs

1991. Christian Slater, Milla Jovovich; dir. Bruce A. Evans. "Ne'er do well" George Kuffs becomes San Francisco patrolman. Hi-fi surround, cc. (PG-13) 102 min. VHS, Beta priced for rental. LD \$34.98. MCA/Universal.

The Last of Mrs. Cheyney

1937. B&W. Joan Crawford, William Powell, Robert Montgomery; dir. Richard Boleslawski. Jewel thief mingles with the upper crust. Critics liked this version better than Norma Shearer's 1929 success; audiences didn't. Hi-fi mono. (NR) 99 min. VHS, Beta \$19.98. MGM/UA.

DRAMA

The Calne Mutiny Court Martial

1988. Brad Davis, Eric Bogosian, Jeff Daniels, Michael Murphy, Peter Gallagher; dir. Robert Altman. Adaptation of Herman Wouk's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. Mono. (PG) 100 min. VHS, Sp.-subtitled VHS \$89.95. Vidmark.

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Madame Bovary

1991. Isabelle Huppert; dir. Claude Chabrol. Sumptuous but slow-moving adaptation of Gustave Flaubert's novel. Stereo, subtitled. (PG-13) 130 min. VHS \$89.98. LD \$39.98. Republic.

The Man in the Moon

1991. Sam Waterston, Tess Harper, Jason London, Reese Witherspoon; dir. Robert Mulligan. Tender coming-of-age tale: Two sisters in 1950s Louisiana fall for a new neighbor. Hi-fi surround, cc. (PG-13) 99 min. VHS, Beta \$94.99. LD (letterboxed) \$29.98. MGM/UA.

The Sophisticated Gents

1981. Paul Winfield, Ron O'Neal, Alfre Woodard; dir. Harry Falk. Members of a black athletic club reunite after 25 years. Hi-fi mono. (NR) 200 min. VHS only (2 cass.), \$89.95. Xenon.

Terminal Bliss

1991. Luke Perry, Timothy Owen; wr./dir. Jordan Alan. *Less Than Zero*-type anguish in 90210 "dreamboat" Perry's film debut. Hi-fi mono, cc. (R) 94 min. VHS \$89.98. LD \$29.98. Cannon.

In the White City

1983. Bruno Ganz, Teresa Madruga; dir. Alain Tanner. The director of *Jonah Who Will Be 25 in the Year 2000* and the star of *Wings of Desire* collaborate on a loosely structured, evocative, moody work. Mono, subtitled, letterboxed. (NR) 108 min. VHS only, \$79.95. New Yorker.

HORROR/THRILLER

Back in the U.S.S.R.

1992. Natalya Negoda, Frank Whaley, Roman Polanski; dir. Deran Sarafian. American tourist in Moscow embroiled in theft, murder and other atypical holiday hijinks. Hi-fi stereo, cc. (R) 88 min. VHS, Beta \$94.98. LD \$39.98. FoxVideo.

Caroline?

1989. Stephanie Zimbalist, Patricia Neal, George Grizzard; dir. Joseph Sargent. Hallmark Hall of Fame suspense: Daughter of wealthy family, presumed dead, returns after 15 years. Stereo, cc. (PG) 100 min. VHS \$89.98. LD \$29.98. Republic.

Tales From the Darkside Volume 3

1984-86. Danny Aiello, Justine Bateman, Tippi Hedren, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. Five creepy new chillers. Mono. (NR) 100 min. VHS only, \$89.95. Worldvision.

Waxwork II: Lost in Time

1992. Zach Galligan, Alexander Godunov; dir. Anthony Hickox. Couple propelled into horror-filled universe. Hi-fi stereo. (R) 104 min. VHS only, \$49.98. LIVE.

ACTION/ADVENTURE

Double Crossed

1991. Dennis Hopper, Robert Carradine; dir. Roger Young. Hopper steals the show in the true-life story of a drug smuggler turned DEA informant. Hi-fi stereo, cc. (NR) 111 min. VHS, Beta, Sp.-subtitled

continued on page 74

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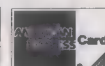
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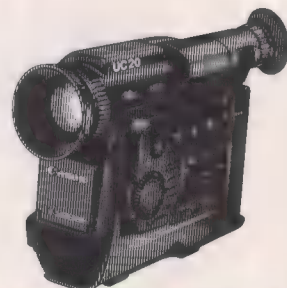
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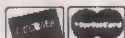


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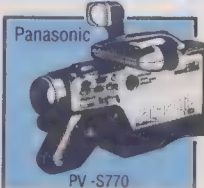
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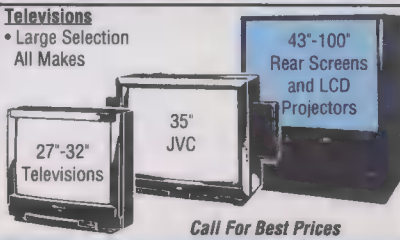
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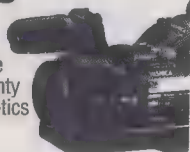
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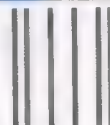
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Beethoven Lives Upstairs

1992. Neil Munro, Illya Woloshyn; dir. David Devine. Boy befriends lodger (Ludwig Van Beethoven) to the sounds of excerpts from 25 of the composer's works. Hi-fi stereo. (NR) 52 min. VHS \$19.98. LD \$34.95. Devine Videoworks.

The Ezra Jack Keats Library

1992. Some anim. Based on outstanding children's books, including *The Snowy Day*. Mono. 45 min. VHS only, \$19.95. Children's Circle (800-KIDS-VID, in CT 203-222-0002).

Nonsense and Lullabies

1992. 2 vols. "Nursery Rhymes" and "Poems for Children," with the magic touch of Michael Sporn Animation. Hi-fi stereo, cc. 27 min. each. VHS only, \$9.98 each. f.h.e.

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Industrial Video Graphics Pop Video

1992. "Beat videos": way-cool computer, graphics and animation designed to accompany music. 60 min. each. VHS only, \$16 each. Blue Sand Video Productions (216-881-6440).

What Kids Want to Know About Sex and Growing Up

1992. Blush-reducing Children's Television Workshop production, aimed at parents and their 8- to 12-year-olds. With companion guide. Mono, cc. 60 min. VHS only, \$14.95. PBS.

MUSIC/PERFORMING ARTS

Hank Williams Jr. Greatest Video Hits

1992 comp. Plus a look at the artist's business and personal life. Hi-fi stereo, cc. 40 min. VHS only, \$16.98. Warner Reprise.

Laughter and Lust

1992. Pop jazz musician Joe Jackson in a '91 Sydney, Australia, performance, with tunes from *Look Sharp* and on. Hi-fi stereo. 75 min. VHS only, \$19.98. A*Vision.

Herbie Hancock Trio: Hurricanel

1984. Switzerland jazz performance, with Ron Carter on bass and Billy Cobham on drums. Hi-fi stereo. 60 min. VHS, Beta \$19.98. V.I.E.W.

Sentimental Journey

1970. Pearl Bailey hosts collection of three NBC specials with 27 timeless performers, including Ella Fitzgerald, the Temptations, Count Basie, Al Hirt and Mel Tormé. Mono. 147 min. VHS only, \$29.95. EMG (805-482-7163).

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The Addams Family

1964. B&W. 3 vols. 12 episodes from the Carolyn Jones-John Astin TV series. Digital mono. Approx. 100 min. each. CLV 2 sides each. \$29.95 each. Lumivision.

Los Olvidados

1950. B&W. Alfonso Mejia, Roberto Cobo; dir. Luis Bunuel. Disturbing, alternately surreal and graphically true-to-life vision of juvenile delinquents in the Mexican slums. Digital mono, subtitled. (NR) 80 min. Side 2 CAV. \$49.95. Image.

Public Enemy Little Caesar

Double feature. *Enemy*: 1931. B&W. James Cagney, Jean Harlow, Mae Clarke; dir. William Wellman. *Caesar*: 1930. B&W. Edward G. Robinson, Douglas Fairbanks Jr.; dir. Mervyn LeRoy. Two gangster classics accompanied by Bugs Bunny cartoon, *Keystone Hotel* short and trailers. Digital mono. (NR) 164 min. \$39.98. MGM/UA.

The Right Stuff

1983. Scott Glenn, Ed Harris, Sam Shepard, Dennis Quaid, Barbara Hershey; dir. Philip Kaufman. Epic adaptation of Tom Wolfe's novel on the beginnings of the space program, shown to advantage on letterboxed laserdisc. Digital surround, cc. (PG) 193 min. \$39.98. Warner.

Some Like It Hot

1959. B&W. Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, Jack Lemmon; dir. Billy Wilder. Just when you thought you'd seen the last edition of this classic: remastered, letterboxed and priced to sell. With trailer. Digital mono. (NR) 120 min. \$29.98. MGM/UA.

The Taking of Pelham One Two Three

1974. Walter Matthau, Robert Shaw; dir. Joseph Sargent. Tense action: Transit Authority employee races to satisfy subway hijackers—before they start killing hostages. With trailer. Digital mono. (R) 106 min. \$34.98. MGM/UA.

Tears for Fears: Tears Rolling Down

1992 comp. Greatest hits, '82-'92. Digital stereo. 50 min. \$29.95. PolyGram.

What's Up, Doc?

1972. Barbra Streisand, Ryan O'Neal, Madeline Kahn; dir. Peter Bogdanovich. Harkens back to screwball comedies of the '30s, with stuffed-shirt musicologist hounded by uninhibited female. With trailer. Digital mono. (G) 94 min. \$34.98. Warner.

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SCREENS TO COME

continued from page 33

lines on our cabinets are curves, because this produces a softer look. A TV can be many things, a lifestyle statement or an object of status. But sometimes it just needs to be quiet."

AUDIO CAMOUFLAGE

Just when it looked like design doctors had prevailed over Godzilla-sized picture tubes, surround-sound systems raised their heads. The exploding popularity of home theater systems has inspired a dramatic improvement in TV sound quality, even to the point of leading TV makers to build in subwoofers and surround effects from stereo speakers. The downside is greater bulk for beleaguered designers to render svelte.

"The consumer is looking for spacious sound, but not a huge TV box," explains Ichikawa, "so we mounted speakers on the back of some TV sets. On other models, we made the speakers detachable with flat bottoms so they would stand up." Toshiba attacked the

problem another way, recalls Ban. "We knew big speakers would make our cabinets too large, so we reduced the size of the speakers, using horns (which are narrow) with a subwoofer in the extra space in the rear of the TV cabinet." The concept led to a line of sets, dubbed Cinema Series, that feature extremely narrow speaker grilles on both sides of the monitor.

Inspiration, designers agree, often comes from the culture at large. Says RCA's Lenzi: "We try to stay close to our alter egos in related consumer areas — clothing fashions, interior design, trends in living habits. You have to watch fashion's symbols. The Walkman became a fashion statement, and people who never set foot on a basketball court are wearing Nike Airs."

To keep abreast of popular tastes, Mazzetta hops on his motorcycle and cruises from his suburban Chicago home into Indiana and Wisconsin. "You can't be totally wrapped up in what you're doing," he says. "I like to walk into a local WalMart and see how people live."

LOOKING AHEAD

When they look into their crystal

cathode-ray tubes, what trends do the television industry's leading designers foresee?

• *The new geometry of widescreen TV.* Zenith's Althans says the forthcoming 16:9 picture ratio will be more forgiving from a design standpoint because its high-impact image comes in a low-profile box, wider than it is tall.

• *The disappearance of TV cabinets altogether.* In-wall televisions — just a picture in a frame set flush within a wall — will come on strong.

• *The TV as art object.* As some TV sets vanish into the wall, says Lenzi, we'll see a counter-trend: rear-projection sets that take on the look of abstract sculpture.

In the big picture, Lenzi says, the future of TV design rests in the hands of young artists still honing their visions. Lenzi himself participates in student design programs Thomson sponsors at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, and at Ohio State University. "We asked the students at Pasadena to design the home theater of the future," he says.

You can bet those concepts will be penciled on a grand canvas. ■

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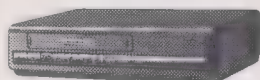
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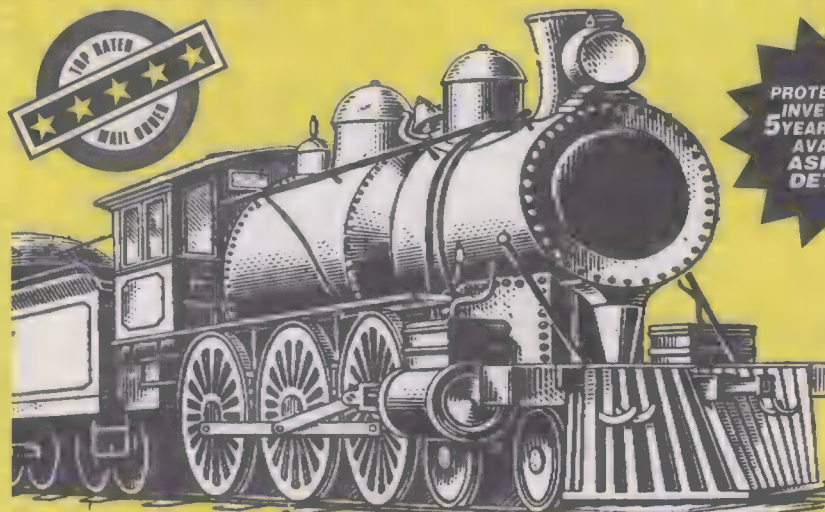
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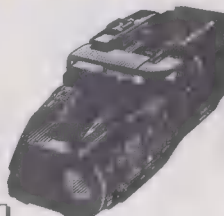


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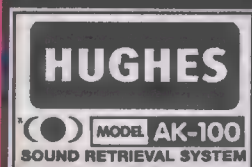
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PV-720	12x Zoom	789.99
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PV-5770		Call
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RCA



8mm Camcorders

PRO 810		Call
PRO 815	8x Zoom	Call
PRO 820A	8x Zoom	Call
PRO 825	Hi Stereo	Call
PRO 850		Call
PRO 860	8:1 Zoom	Call
PRO 865	8x Remote	Call
PRO 880	Hi-8	Call

VHS Camcorders

CC-390	2 Lux	Call
CC-405	8X Zoom	Call
CC-415	Pro-Edit	Call
CC-510	10X Zoom	Call
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CC-560	S-VHS	Call

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E-51		Call
E-57	10x Zoom	Call
E-61	8x Zoom	Call
E-65		Call
E06		Call
E08	New Color	Call
E09	Viewfinder	Call
H800	Hi-Fi Stereo	Call
H850		Call
L-1	New!	Call
A-1		Call
A-1 MK II		Call
A-1 Digital		Call



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VL-20	Video light	46, 85
VL-30	30W Light	Call
TL-37, 46, 55	Tele	Call
WD-37, 46, 55	Wide	Call
RS-AIM	Rainshield	Call
MM-200	Stereo Mix	Call
GB-100	Grip Belt	Call

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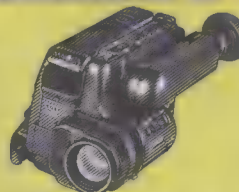
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Camcorders

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R-86S		Call
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R-861	Sports Finder	Call
R-105	10x Zoom	Call
R-108H	Hi-Band	Call

MINOLTA



V-16R VHS	Call
V-18R VHS	Call
V-20R VHS	Call
Master 8-80	Call
Master 8-308	Call
Master 8-406	Call
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HI-FI AUDIO

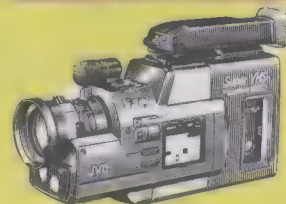
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Sansui

SONY

Camcorders

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CCD-F401	New	Call
CCD-F501	New	Call
CCD-V701	New	Call
CCD-V810	New	Call
TR-6		Call
TR-7		Call
TR-81		Call
CCD-V5000		Call
CCD-SP-9		Call
SLV-585	New	Call
SLV-686	New	Call
SLV-R5	New	Call
MPD-333	Laser Disk	Call

JVC



Camcorders

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GR-SX90U	Hi-Fi	Call
GR-A65	8:1 Zoom	Call
GR-S70	S-VHS-C	Call
GR-303U	8x Zoom	749.99
GR-S707	Hi-Fi	Call
GR-S505U	Hi-Fi Stereo	949.99

Quasar



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VM-518		Call
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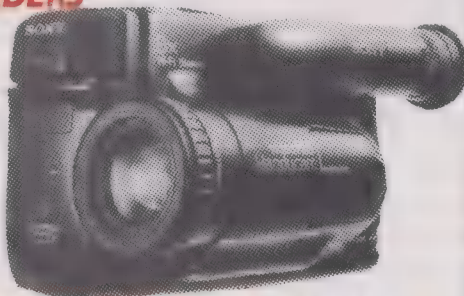
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TOSHIBA, HITACHI
SONY, JVC & MORE**

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- DOLBY® SURROUND 100 Watts Per Channel Remote ... **\$199**
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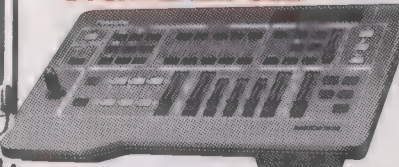
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Above Camcorders Are Made By Sony / Lens, Prices & Warranty Vary by Brand

SONY CCDV-801

\$848



SONY CCD-F501

\$648

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SONY CCD TR-81, YASHICA KD-H1, RICOH R-88

• Hi 8-8K Zoom • HiFi Stereo • Wireless Remote • 470 Lines Resolution • 1/10,000 Shutter Speed

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SONY CCDTR51

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SONY CCD-TR101

\$998



SONY CCD-TR71

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YOUR CHOICE

SONY CCD-TR101, RICOH R-18H, YASHICA KXH3, NIKON VN-NEW

Specifications
• 10x Zoom • HiFi Stereo • Wireless Remote Control • Fuzzy Logic • EIS

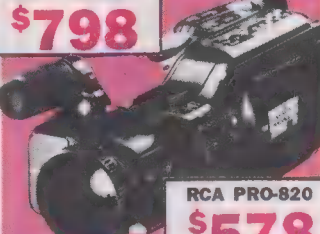
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Specifications:
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\$798



RCA PRO-820

\$578

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RCA PRO-880, MINOLTA 8-808, HITACHI VMH18A

• Hi-8 • 8x Zoom w/Macro • 4 Mode program AE • 3 lux • Character Generator • HiFi Stereo • Infrared Focus • 10,000 Shutter Speed

OR RCA PRO-820, MINOLTA 8-308, HITACHI VME15A

• 8x Zoom w/Macro • 4 Mode program AE • 3 lux • Character Generator • Infrared Focus • 10,000 Shutter Speed

Above Camcorders Are Made By Hitachi / Lens, Prices & Warranty Vary by Brand

FUJIF-128SW

• 12X Zoom
• Wireless Remote
• Pistol Grip
• Wide Angle
• Fujix Industrial Optics

FUJI

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H-80.....CALL
F-60 Wide.....CALL
F-122SW(12X).....CALL

SONY CCD-V701

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• Infrared Focusing



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CCD FX-410.CALL
CCD FX-510.CALL

CANON UC1

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• 2 Lux
• Slim Design

Canon



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UC-20.....CALL

E-08.....CALL

E-65.\$648 E-67.CALL

CANON A-1 DIGITAL

• Hi-Band Stereo
• Remote
• TTL Focus
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Canon



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• 4 Lux
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JVC



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GR-AW1U.....SPORT CAM

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GRM-30U..CALL GRAX-50U...CALL

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MINOLTA 8-428

COMPACT 8MM
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• 2CCD Hi-8.....CALL

MINOLTAC-618

MAXXUM OPTICS
Compact VHS-C
• 1 Lux
• 8X Zoom
• 4,000 Shutter



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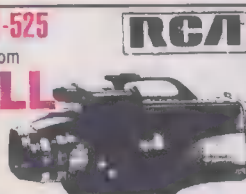
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Minolta C-516.....CALL

RCA CC-525

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RCA CC-180.....CALL

MINOLTA V-228R

PRO ED

MAXXUM OPTICS
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• 2 Lux
• 10,000 Shutter
• Infrared Focus



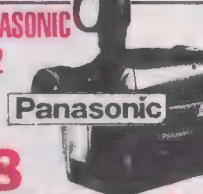
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PANASONIC PV-42

• VHS-C
• 8X Zoom
• EIS • Digital



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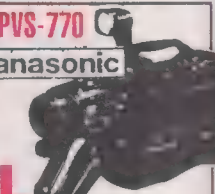
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AX-10
GRAX-2.....549
GRAX.....579
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GR-SX90.....849
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HRD-940.....359
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JXS-V55.....419
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C-618.....CALL
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GR 629
AX-10
GRAX-2.....549
GRAX.....579
GRAX-50U.....CALL
GR-SX90.....849
VCR
DX-40.....229
HRD-720.....CALL
HRD-910.....329
HRD-940.....359
HRD-970.....399
HRD-980.....419
HRS-4700.....439
HRS-6700.....589
HRS-10000.....1989
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JXS-V55.....419
JXS-300.....CALL
JXS-900.....CALL
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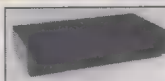
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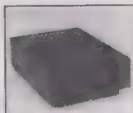
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SHOCK

continued from page 39

has a range of models. There are cheap TV sets and expensive ones. I think Sony and our competitors will be able to make inexpensive TV sets that will receive programs in a widescreen format, but without the higher resolution. More expensive sets will have better tubes and decoders and get true high-definition, widescreen images. This is marketplace scalability."

The reception at NAB to wide-screen systems with less-than-HDTV quality was decidedly cool. Dozens of demonstrations of widescreen NTSC monitors were scattered throughout the maze of exhibits. But flaws in the enlarged NTSC pictures were evident. "If you want to see how bad widescreen NTSC television can be, come up to our suite," joked one Panasonic executive.

Such limitations didn't stop JVC. The company demonstrated a 36-inch, 16:9 "multi-application" consumer receiver and recording system that can record and show just about any kind of TV program. Using a MUSE/NTSC converter, the TV and accompanying S-VHS recorder can show and record true HDTV programs in widescreen NTSC. Viewers can see the widescreen program without the higher resolution. Of course, the receiver can handle standard letterbox and other widescreen NTSC formats.

When conventional NTSC programs come on the screen, the JVC receiver activates two motorized sliding doors that move in from each side toward the center of the screen to change the aspect ratio to 4:3. The AV-36W1 now sells for about \$7,000 in Japan and is expected to be introduced in the United States soon at a lower price, JVC officials said.

Other major developments and products are certain to interest videophiles seeking more sophisticated gear. One comes in the area of desktop video production through a show-stopping product called the VideoToolkit. This is a HyperCard-based videotape logging and assembly program developed by Abate Video of Norfolk, Massachusetts. Using a plain-vanilla Macintosh (anything from a Plus upward) as an edit controller, one can maneuver consumer camcorders and VCRs to log, edit and assemble video programs.

VideoToolkit provides cables which tie a Macintosh to the Control L, S or P interfaces on supported Sony and Sony-compatible equipment, the Control M

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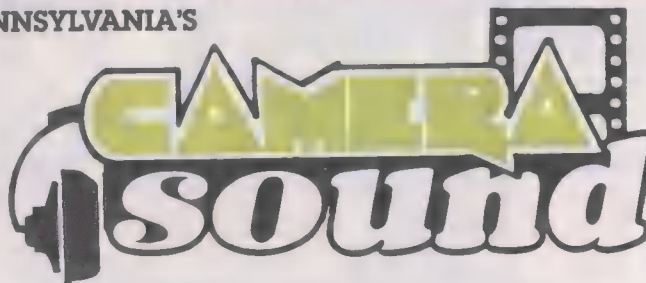
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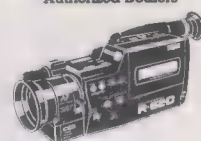
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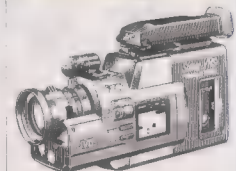
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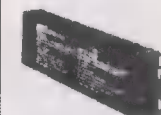
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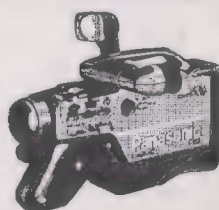
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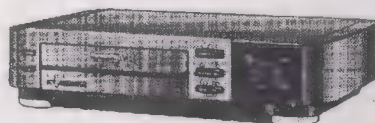
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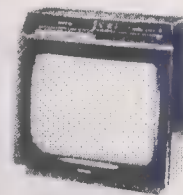
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VHS (VCR) Player A ☐ VHS (VCR) Player E ☐
Laserdisc Player/Combination Player B ☐ Laserdisc Player/Combination Player F ☐
8MM Camcorder C ☐ 8MM Camcorder G ☐
8MM Deck D ☐ 8MM Deck H ☐

3. How many pre-recorded movies do you own? Please indicate by format. 4. Please indicate all formats in which you view or would like to view pre-recorded movies?

VHS Laserdisc 8MM
0 I ☐ O ☐ U ☐
1-9 J ☐ P ☐ V ☐ VHS
10-25 K ☐ Q ☐ W ☐ Laserdisc
26-49 L ☐ R ☐ X ☐ 8MM
50-99 M ☐ S ☐ Y ☐
100+ N ☐ T ☐ Z ☐

5. Are you currently a subscriber to VIDEO? 4 ☐ Yes 5 ☐ No

Please circle product numbers to receive desired information

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105
106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165
166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195

Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery. Card expires November 19, 1992 RS7A

Name _____ (please print)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Number (with Area Code) _____

1. What products do you currently own? 2. What products do you plan to buy in the next 12 months?

VHS (VCR) Player A ☐ VHS (VCR) Player E ☐
Laserdisc Player/Combination Player B ☐ Laserdisc Player/Combination Player F ☐
8MM Camcorder C ☐ 8MM Camcorder G ☐
8MM Deck D ☐ 8MM Deck H ☐

3. How many pre-recorded movies do you own? Please indicate by format. 4. Please indicate all formats in which you view or would like to view pre-recorded movies?

VHS Laserdisc 8MM
0 I ☐ O ☐ U ☐
1-9 J ☐ P ☐ V ☐ VHS
10-25 K ☐ Q ☐ W ☐ Laserdisc
26-49 L ☐ R ☐ X ☐ 8MM
50-99 M ☐ S ☐ Y ☐
100+ N ☐ T ☐ Z ☐

5. Are you currently a subscriber to VIDEO? 4 ☐ Yes 5 ☐ No

Please circle product numbers to receive desired information

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105
106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165
166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195

Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery. Card expires November 19, 1992 RS7A

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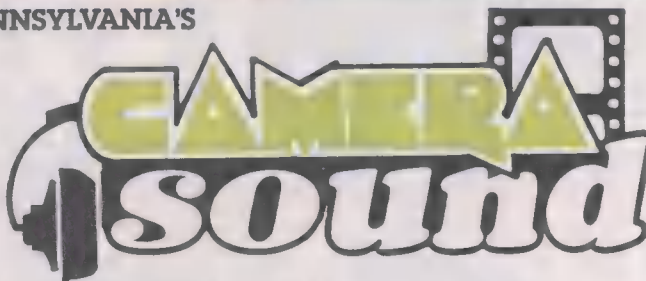
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E-65		Call
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MM-200	Stereo Mix	Call
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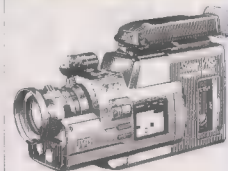
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GR-SX90U	Hi-Fi	Call
GR-A65	8:1 Zoom	Call
GR-S70	S-VHS-C	Call
GR-303U	8x Zoom	Call
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GR-S505	Hi-Fi Stereo	Call

Video Recorders

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HR-D 680	4 Head	Call
HR-D 860	4 Head	Call
	Hi-Fi	Call
HR-D 910	4 Head	Call
	Hi-Fi	Call
HR-D 960	Jog/Shuttle	Call
HR-D 970	Jog/Shuttle	Call
HR-FC100	VHS/VHS-C	Call

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JX-S 300	AV Selector	Call
JX-S 900	AV Selector	Call
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RM-V1000	Edit	Call

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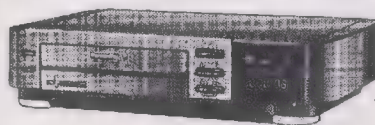
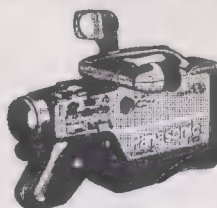
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VHS-C
Palmcorders

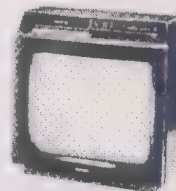
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PV704 PV760
PV710 PVS770
PV720

PV19
PV21
PV41

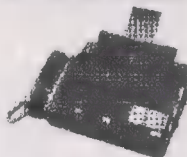


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PV2101 PV4114 PV4160
PV2110 PV4120 PV4164
PV4110 PV4127 PVS4167



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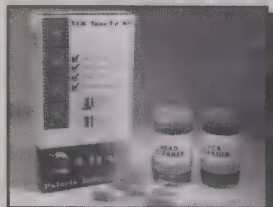
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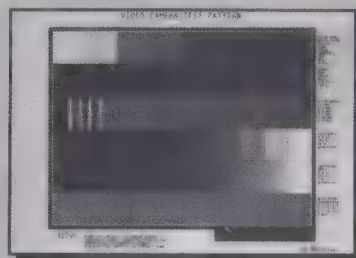


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interface on Panasonic equipment and
NEC's PC-VCR.

Cuetrack is a ready-made Video-
Toolkit stack that allows the user to cre-
ate a video database by logging scenes
and tapes. The process is simple. First,
mark the "in" and "out" points of a
scene, give it a name, then add it to
a clip list. Once the list is created, Cue-
track can be used to rearrange, assemble
and edit a new tape. Edit accuracy is
within two frames, and up to three video
devices can be used at once. Best of all,
VideoToolkit is priced at only \$279.

The other "trickle-down" trend on
display at NAB is improved CCD imag-
ing. Both Sony and Toshiba made histo-
ry this year by introducing the first high-
definition chip cameras. Only a few
years ago they said it couldn't be done.
The new cameras have CCD imagers
with an extraordinary two million pixels
in each of the three chips each camera
uses. This is nearly five times more ele-
ments than the best NTSC broadcast
cameras of only a year ago.

These new super CCDs are hand-
made and more precious than gold, but
the manufacturing breakthrough that
made them possible is expected eventu-
ally to work its way to consumer equip-
ment. In fact, the cost of professional
CCD imaging is already coming down
drastically. Just look at Minolta's Master
Pro 8-918 two-CCD Hi8 camcorder,
which is closing in fast on true broadcast
standards. Its price: \$2,700.

In less exotic technologies, S-VHS
and Hi8 grew into full-fledged adult-
hood at NAB. JVC pushed hard to make
S-VHS the replacement format for
existing 3/4-inch equipment, in part by
equipping new S-VHS pro gear with spe-
cial dub connectors for direct hookup to
3/4-inch VCRs, and with RS-422 serial
control interfaces, which are compatible
with many 3/4-inch editing controllers.

JVC also introduced the BR-S525U,
an advanced S-VHS player with vari-
able tracking heads and a timebase cor-
rector, giving it the ability to produce
razor-sharp images from half speed to 3x
normal speed. Combined with a com-
panion editing recorder and controller,
the machine produces high-quality slow
motion or reverse edits with instant, jit-
ter-free starts from still frames, a world's
first for the format.

Not to be left out, Sony introduced ■
Hi8 camcorder for videographers who
want the best the format has to offer.
The EVW-300, weighing less than 13
pounds, uses three half-inch Hyper
HAD CCD sensors which provide a sig-
nal-to-noise ratio of 60 decibels and a
picture resolution of 700 TV lines, specs
comparable with the best broadcast
cameras. Automatic white balance trac-

ing allows users to effortlessly maintain
optimum white balance in changing
light conditions. Also included is Clear
Scan, a new feature that eliminates
streaks when shooting computer dis-
plays. It can be yours for \$6,650.

Also on the Hi8 front, several tape
manufacturers offered improved profes-
sional cassettes designed to lock out
dust and dirt. Due to the small size of
the tape, the Hi8 format is especially
susceptible to dropouts in dusty condi-
tions. Sony's new HMPX metal-particle
and HMEV metal-evaporated Pro Hi8
tapes feature lower dropout rates, more
protective album boxes, and "an anti-
static lid to prevent charge-induced dust
attraction," Sony announced. Maxell
and 3M also showed new professional-
grade Hi8 cassettes. The pro tapes can
be used in consumer as well as profes-
sional equipment.

On the audio front, several new
products might be of interest to consum-
ers. Rycote, the British maker of those
Windjammer microphone windscreens
that resemble small furry animals, pro-
duced the "mini-windJAMMER" for
consumer camcorders. A professional
windscreen for serious outdoor protec-
tion, the acoustic fur cover simply pulls
over the camcorder's existing foam
windscreen. Three sizes are available
from Professional Sound Corp. in North
Hollywood, California.

New audio products from Audio-
Technica also have consumer video ap-
plications. The PRO 88W VHF wireless
microphone system is a cut above most
in the \$230 price range. It has dual
switchable frequencies and comes with
your choice of either an omni or a uni-
directional condenser microphone. The
receiver mounts directly onto a consum-
er camcorder. The \$299 AT822 X/Y
stereo microphone is a one-piece hand-
held or camera-mounted device with
professional specifications. And the
\$270 AT835 shotgun microphone is
ideal for the serious video sound record-
ist on a budget.

And last, but not least: You've seen
cranes and dollies on movie sets, but did
you ever think of owning one? A new
generation of portable cranes (called
jibs) and dollies entered the market a
few years ago for professional video cam-
corder users. The prices continue to
drop. Now Cotton Enterprises of Eagle,
Idaho, is offering the Eagle 1 professional
camera dolly for only \$995, a significant
reduction in the cost of this type of
shooting aid. ■

Frank Beacham is author of the new
American Cinematographer Video
Manual (ASC Press, Hollywood, CA,
\$34.95).



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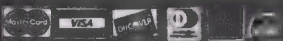
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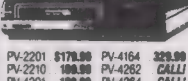
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PV-750 700.00 PV-42 650.00
PV-760 800.00 PV-52 CALL
PV-770 900.00 PV-332 CALL
PV-645 640.00 PV-362 CALL
PV-108 474.00 PV-372 CALL
PV-19 404.00 AG-450 1000.00
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PV-4201 100.00 PV-4284 CALL
PV-4210 200.00 PV-41 CALL
PV-4214 220.00 PV-54 CALL
PV-4120 250.00 PV-54 CALL
PV-4127 294.00 PV-54 CALL
PV-4250 CALL AG-W1 1000.00
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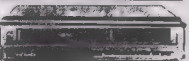
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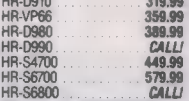
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VT-M250 CALL
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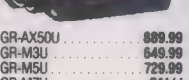
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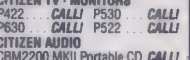
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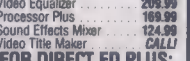
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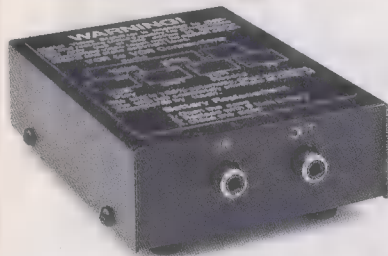
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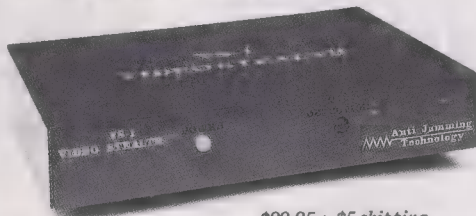
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LAYERED LOOK

continued from page 36

ple tape rollers, which dry the coatings as they pass through.

TWO COATS

Once magnetic particles have been applied, the next step is to determine how to layer them onto the tape. Audio/video signals are surprisingly complex. A typical evening of VCR use demands luminance and chrominance information, hi-fi audio signals, linear audio tracks and sync signals for both the rotating video heads and tape speed. All must be stored in a medium about 4 microns thick.

In order to do this most efficiently, different signals are stored at different depths on the tape, depending on the frequencies they require. For example, luminance (or brightness) information has the highest frequency and the smallest recording current, so it's stored near the top, about 0.3 microns deep. Chroma (or color) information, with its lower frequency, is recorded deeper into the tape. Audio signals, with even lower frequencies, are stored deeper yet.

Conventional videotapes are produced with a single layer, or coating, of magnetic particles. Unfortunately, this system tends to emphasize the highest frequencies, which are closest to the surface. As a result, color definition has traditionally been compromised in favor of brightness.

Manufacturers now use a technique called double-coating to transcend this limitation. Simply put, double-coating uses two layers of magnetic particles attached to the base. The base film is covered with a first coating about 3 microns thick, which has been magnetically optimized for lower-frequency signals. This is topped by a second coating, optimized for higher frequency information by using finer particles than those in the bottom layer. The advantage is obvious: Each component of the signal is stored in its own, custom-tailored medium.

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Early on, the developers of VHS decided that two hours was the optimal running time for a videocassette at the standard play speed. At that duration, most movies would fit comfortably on one tape. Of course, anything running longer than two hours, like a baseball game or an epic film, was subject to either multiple tapes or a slower recording speed. The former situation meant untended recording would be impossible,

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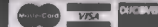
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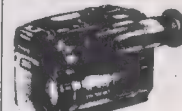
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and the latter compromised quality.

The obvious answer was to increase the length of tape, but again, easier said than done. This can be accomplished in one of two ways: Either make the tape base thinner, or make the cassette hubs smaller. Thinner tape has proven a dicey solution, because videotape runs along a complex, tension-dependent path that wraps around a rotating head drum. Make the tapes thinner, and you invite all sorts of stretching problems and even breakage, particularly around cassette guide posts.

The solution came in one bold stroke—a new base material. Traditionally, videotape base was made from a compound called polyethylene terephthalate, or PET for short. New long-length tapes feature a base film called polyethylene naphthalate, or PEN. Tapes incorporating PEN bases can be up to 40 percent more elastic than earlier products, which means the overall thickness of the tape can be reduced by almost 20 percent.

This has led to the increasing popularity of heretofore questionable or unavailable tape lengths, like T-160s and even T-180s. Even though these tapes are thinner overall, the thickness of the all-important coating is not reduced, resulting in the same performance you'd expect from ■ standard T-120 cassette.

All in all, these advances add up to be the biggest bargain in video. After all, if you could substantially improve the effectiveness of your VCR or monitor for a dollar or two, you'd do it, wouldn't you? That's exactly what you're accomplishing by investing in the new generation of premium tapes. The difference is clearly discernible, and can make a bigger difference in performance than that shiny new deck you've had your eyes on. ■

NEW DISH

continued from page 42

perhaps even before. This would profoundly affect the video rental business across America.

Macrovision says it has a technology that will let viewers either watch a pay-per-view film or record it as well as watch it. The latter service would cost more. So far, the DBS companies have expressed no interest in this system. Even so, it won't solve the drowsy viewer's dilemma, because the decision to record would have to be made prior to the movie's start.

DirecTV has ambitious plans to incorporate widescreen and digital video technology into its system, and all DBS players talk about providing digital high-definition TV signals as soon as they are

available. If the Federal Communications Commission meets its 1993 target for picking an HDTV standard, DirecTV would have plenty of time to use it in its first generation of equipment.

In the meantime, Thomson plans to build S-VHS picture quality and 16:9 format capability into its first DBS units so that purchasers of widescreen RCA TV sets will have something to look at. Thomson is also pushing something it calls MPEG + +, a modification of the digital transmission standard adopted by the Motion Picture Experts Group. The company claims MPEG + + is equally satisfactory for transmitting digital audio and video over the air, through cable or via satellite without sacrificing signal quality—and that it can also handle improved NTSC, widescreen NTSC and HDTV transmissions. If MPEG adopts Thomson's modification, DirecTV will use it from day one. If not, the DBS service will conform to the recognized standards. ■

CANON CAMCORDER

continued from page 15

corder grip and a sports-type viewfinder, the highly useful FlexiGrip rotates a full 180 degrees, from straight up to straight down. This lets you shoot over the heads of a crowd or at ground level. The sports viewfinder lets you see the screen even when it is held far from the eye.

The zoom rocker and run/stop button occupy their usual places, but both are mounted on the FlexiGrip, so they swivel with it. Camera controls, including those for fade, white balance lock and titler control, cover much of the left side. Timer controls, VCR controls (which also select characters for the titler) and the light shoe sit on top.

The manual zoom ring—a rarity these days—allows fast, accurate shot framing, although for close-ups, it requires manual activation of the macro focus range. Manual focus also operates with ■ ring.

The jack arrangement is a little peculiar. The E250 records in stereo from the microphone or the external mic input, but not from line sources. If you want to use the E250 to make an 8mm dub from another source (as you would if you wanted to bring a couple of movies on a trip and use it as a VCR), you'll have to settle for mono. Stereo line output is through a mini jack instead of RCA jacks, but Canon supplies an adapter cord.

The small remote control duplicates many of the buttons on the top of the camcorder. There are also ■ few for cam-

Canon E250 8mm Camcorder

Price: \$1,499

Weight & Size (h/w/d): 2.2 lbs. without battery, light and cassette; light—0.1 lb.; battery—0.4 lb.; 5 x 4-3/8 x 11-7/8 inches

Image Sensor: 1/3-inch CCD, 250,000 effective pixels

Lens: f/2.2; 12x (6.7-80.4mm) power zoom with macro

Filter Diameter: 37mm

Minimum Focusing Distance: 2 feet exclusive of macro range

Autofocus: infrared

Minimum Illumination: 4.3 lux at normal gain, 2.9 lux with gain up

Iris: auto with lock and gain-up options

Auto Fade: hold-down type

Shutter Speeds (sec.): normal (1/60), 1/100, 1/250, 1/500, 1/1,000, 1/2,000, 1/4,000, 1/10,000

White Balance: auto with lock

Viewfinder: 0.6-inch CRT electronic, with diopter and onscreen indicators for manual focus, WB lock, shutter speed, title color, gain up, line in, transport operation, self/interval timer mode, character title, scrolling, counter, tape warning, battery warning, dew, clock battery warning, time and date

Viewfinder Controls: diopter focus and grip/viewer angle

VCR Controls: play, stop, rewind/search, fast forward/search, record start/pause (separate buttons on remote)

Microphone: stereo electret condenser

Jacks: external stereo mic, phones, stereo line out, video in/out, DC out for RF adapter, mono audio in/out

Tape Format & Speed: 8mm SP

Video Heads: 2

Cue & Review Search: 20x

Fast Forward/Rewind Time: 6.5/5.5 min for P6-120

Remote Pause: through IR remote

Remote Control: IR wireless with wide/tele rocker and buttons for start/stop, fade start/stop, counter, onscreen, tape return, rewind/search, fast forward/search, stop, play, record and still

Audio: hi-fi AFM stereo

Titles/Graphics: 2 lines of up to 16 characters each with horizontal scroll, 1-page digital superimposer

Timer: 10-second delay/continuous record, 10-second delay/30-second record, 1/2-second record every 10, 20 or 60 seconds

Special Features: video light, FlexiGrip, sports finder, tape return (counter memory), still frame, insert edit, flying erase head

Absent Features: LANC remote control jack, stereo line input, indexing

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution: 250 lines

S/N Ratios (dB): unweighted video—40.3, weighted video—47.3, chroma AM—40.9, chroma PM—37.8

Audio Frequency Response: 50 Hz-15 kHz, +0.1/-3 dB; -11.9 dB at 20 Hz; -7.9 dB at 20 kHz

Hi-Fi Dynamic Range: 72.3 dB

Audio Distortion: 0.4%

RATINGS

Picture: good

Audio: average

Ease of Use: very good

Overall: good

era control: a zoom rocker and buttons for record run/stop and fade start/stop.

The light definitely makes it easier to get indoor pictures in low light. The 12x zoom, however, can be a mixed



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JVC VHS-C \$619

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RCA CC-180 \$678

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Sony 20" Stereo

Auto timer, channel block and sleep timer

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27" stereo surround sound, universal remote

JVC 26" Stereo \$449

MTS stereo, S-VHS input, channel guard, sleep timer

Hitachi 13" Call

181 channel, timer off, last channel recall

Toshiba 30" Stereo \$878

Surround sound stereo, remote

JVC AV2081s \$349

20" stereo, master remote

RCA 25" \$377

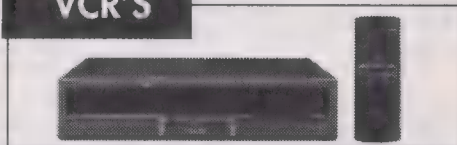
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Hitachi 31" \$998

4 spkr sys, S-VHS in, variable audio out, message timer

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Panasonic PV-4164 \$377

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RCA VR680 \$369

VCR Plus programming, auto tracking, synchro edit

VHS 4 Head Hi-Fi \$289

181 channel, on screen program, real time counter

RCA 4-Head VHS \$248

On screen program, 8 event/1 year

Toshiba M652 \$336

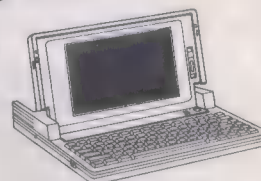
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Brother FAX 380

10 page document feeder, FAX/telephone switch

\$449



Sony D-202 \$179

Dual damper, Mega-Bass, includes headphones

Panasonic KXT4200 \$136

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Whistler 2SE \$139

Compact, high sensitivity, 3 band radar detector

Sony MDR-V6 \$69

Digital headphones, closed ear, 40mm driver

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Digital tune Walkman, clock, alarm, Dolby B

Sony SPP-320 \$199

Cordless Phone, 10 channel transmission, remote select

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4 amps, 7 band EQ, motorized volume, 6+1 CD changer

Panasonic SC-CH7 **Special**

20 watts/channel, CD with 20 track programming, Dolby B/C

Yamaha YST-C11 **\$588**

CD player, dual A/R cassette deck, 4 band EQ, 3 way spkrs



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blessing. It lets you get bigger images of distant subjects, but hand-holding a 12x lens at full telephoto tends to produce shaky pictures.

Most buttons have only one function, with one exception: the white balance lock/gain up button. Quick short presses turn the lock mode on and off; pressing it more than three seconds turns the gain-up mode on and off. Size, texture and position let you tell the buttons apart by touch.

The character and digital memory titlers may be used separately or together. The digital titler converts a picture coming through the lens into a high-contrast image in any of seven colors, so you can make titles from logos, or by writing them out by hand. It superimposes the high-contrast image on other incoming images. The character titler generates up to two lines of 16 characters.

Ease of use is very good and picture quality is good. Audio quality is average for 8mm but certainly better than linear track VHS. Our overall rating is good. The E250 has the performance we expect from a camcorder of its type, and a couple of unusual, useful features thrown in for good measure. ■

YAMAHA AMP

continued from page 24

adjustment, you'll be able to rival the performance of the most sophisticated theater sound systems. Be sure to position the rear speakers so they don't blast into your ears—try putting them above ear level, pointed at the ceiling or walls. Operation may be awkward at first, but with only a little practice ease of use becomes very good.

Audio quality is excellent compared with the dedicated theater sound systems we've tested. However, setup can be a bit more tricky because of the many options. The front and rear effects have a nearly flat frequency response to 20 kilohertz, however certain sound field programs permit a low-pass filter of 5, 7 or 10 kHz. Our measurements were made with the effects off, and we judged the sound quality of the effects subjectively. The effects are pleasing, but large bass and treble adjustments may produce unnatural rear-channel effects.

The performance of the DSP-A1000's video switcher is excellent—it passes 10 megahertz video signals, which is equivalent to about 800 lines of horizontal resolution. Accuracy of colors is excellent. We rate the DSP-A1000 very good to excellent overall—it's an amazingly versatile, good-sounding and attractive A/V amp. ■

COLLECTOR'S CLEARINGHOUSE

I'm looking for VHS tapes of films starring the 1940s radio comedy team of Lum & Abner. Will gladly reimburse for expenses.

R.W. Waits
Box 39368

San Antonio, TX 78218

A few years ago, network TV aired Diana Ross in concert at New York's Central Park. I'm looking for a VHS copy.

John Varkala

330 West Oak Street
Shenandoah, PA 17976

I have been trying, unsuccessfully, to locate a VHS copy of an old Linda Darnell-Tab Hunter film called *Island of Desire*. It was once available, but has been withdrawn. Can any readers help?

Dick Alliger
Box 5

Strathmere, NJ 08248

Editor's note: Saturday's Island is the British title of this film.

I'll reimburse expenses for a good VHS copy of John Candy and Eugene Levy's *The Last Polka*, a one-hour special that aired on HBO in March '85.

Gerry J. Czarnick
3568 50th Avenue
Columbus, NE 68601

My aging father had a bit part in *Hellzapoppin*, a musical with dancing sailors. I have been unable to find it on video. In the '60s it was shown in New York on WOR-TV's "Million Dollar Movie" for an entire week! I will reimburse expenses for anyone who can make me a copy of it.

Rick Bialac
199 Commodore Drive
Milledgeville, GA 31061

I am looking for *To the Devil a Daughter* on VHS; the people at the video store said it was no longer available. I will pay any expenses.

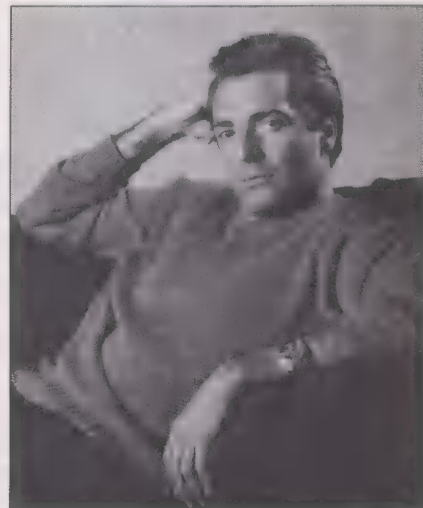
Kenneth Jennings
2318 Vollintine Avenue
Memphis, TN 38108

I collect (and watch repeatedly) Armand Assante movies. I want desperately to find his miniseries *Evergreen*

Dancing sailors & The Last Polka

(NBC, 1985), *Stranger in My Bed* with Lindsay Wagner (NBC), *Jack the Ripper* (CBS, 1988), *Passion and Paradise* (ABC, 1989) and *Napoleon and Josephine: A Love Story*. I will reimburse all expenses.

Mary Anne Lowe
5538 Haverford Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46220

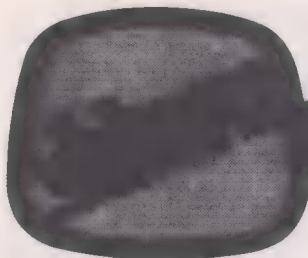


Wanted: Armand Assante's made-for-TV movies.

Editor's note: The following letter, which was sent to a reader responding to a Clearinghouse request, shows just how effective this forum is:

Thank you for that offer to copy *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, but some unknown person (no address, no letter) made me a tape from a laserdisc—a real Class-A job. Indeed, he or she also sent a copy of *One, Two, Three*—amazing, eh?...So far I've received 75 cards or letters!

Send those requests for hard-to-find tapes to Video Magazine, Collector's Clearinghouse, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001. Video Magazine does not locate tapes; this is a reader-to-reader service only, so please do not send a self-addressed envelope. Requests for copyrighted material must be for personal use only. You may offer to reimburse expenses, but the Clearinghouse is not open to requests for the purchase or sale of tapes. If you would like to buy, sell or trade tapes, laserdiscs or video equipment, try placing a classified ad in our sister publication, Video Shopper. It's available on newsstands nationwide.

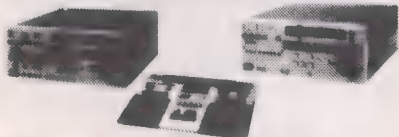


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Sony 3 Chip Camera / HI-8 Docking VTR
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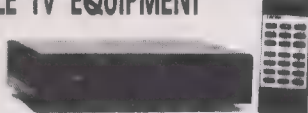
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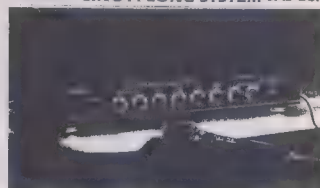
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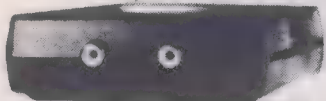
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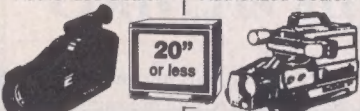


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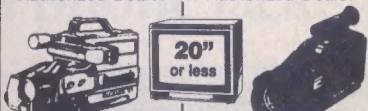


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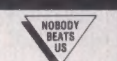
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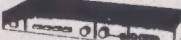
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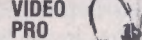
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WE WELCOME CALLS

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OFF THE AIR

The boy in the RestRider bubble

BY STEWART WOLPIN

I'm lying on my back on a mattress filled with what feels like Jell-O, supported by a bed that looks like a fiberglass picnic cooler. It's dark. My head and chest rest under a hood resembling a giant football helmet. A small black curtain across my clavicle, at the helmet's entrance, keeps out external light. Kaleidoscopic images dance on a monitor suspended like a video version of the sword of Damocles directly above my head.

All I can hear is sitar music flowing melodiously from speakers embedded inside my tiny foam-lined cave. All I can feel is the gentle rippling of the gel-filled mattress, which is caused by sound pressure from subwoofers buried below my hips in the white bed's rounded base. I am told this sensory invasion induces relaxing trancelike states. But I'm wide awake, worried someone will tickle me.

The scene is the New York City apartment of Mitchell Rabin, a therapist, masseur, acupuncturist and holistic healer. The hooded divan is called the RestRider, which Bob Goodman, one of its inventors, calls "the flotation tank of the '90s."

Quit giggling. Goodman, along with partner Dave Seefelt,

tanks. Goodman previously invented a fully enclosed, egg-shaped tank called Ova, while Seefelt came up with an "open-room" tank like the one in Rabin's apartment. Three years ago, the pair merged their talents to create the RestRider—and d-Stress Systems in Newton, Pennsylvania, to develop and market the RestRider as both a therapeutic aid and a relaxing personal entertainment system.

I discovered the RestRider at January's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. Tucked incongruously in a corner of the Hifonics booth in the show's car audio ghetto, the RestRider reminded me at first of the sick-bay bed in *Star Trek*. But the RestRider is meant to be taken seriously, especially as it's stuffed with high-end audio/video components. The monitor in the helmet's roof, for example, is a high-resolution, top-of-the-line 14-incher from Mitsubishi.

As for audio, the RestRider carries twin six-channel, 50-watt car amplifiers, subwoofers in the bed and full-range coaxial speakers in the hood, all provided by Hifonics, an auto sound supplier based in Ridgefield, New Jersey. Moreover, the helmet's shell-like shape creates a "natural" surround sound based, according to Goodman, on geometric theories formulated by Leonardo Fibonacci, a 13th-century mathematician.

The RestRider also comes packed with a VCR, a CD player and an audio cassette deck. Is this the ultimate way to watch a flick? Possibly. But—and it's a big one—the RestRider's asking price is a hefty \$15,000.

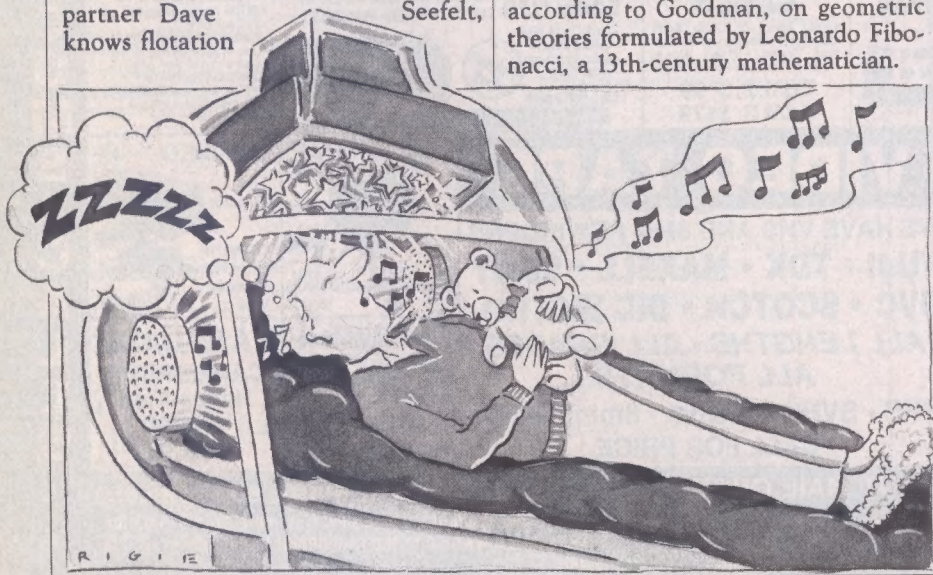
Rabin was gracious enough to permit me to experience the RestRider in entertaining as well as therapeutic modes. So, armed with a bag of videos, I headed for his digs.

My reactions? First, it's a little disconcerting to look up to watch a movie. Second, no one will confuse the RestRider's swirling "surround" sound with Dolby Pro-Logic. The RestRider's natural surround sound sounds like (surprise!) a car stereo. This is a kind of sound one can come to love, but it's definitely unsuitable for video viewing. Third, movie watching is ideally a communal, not a solitary, experience. Finally, what in the world were these guys doing at a consumer electronics show?

The RestRider is not really a consumer electronics device, although it may well serve therapeutic purposes for those who believe trancelike states can enhance their well-being. For example, a sports psychologist in Maplewood, New Jersey, uses the RestRider to help athletes improve muscle efficiency through visual imagery. And Meridian Studios, a postproduction house in Burbank, California, uses the RestRider for research into biofeedback.

"RestRider was developed as a psycho acoustic delivery system," explains Goodman. "Psycho acoustics is found to induce relaxation states." In other words, the RestRider is designed to put you to sleep.

So there I am, lying on my back on a gel-filled mattress atop a large white bed. It's dark. My head and chest are enclosed. All I can see, hear and feel is Michael J. Fox skateboarding toward his destiny at the Twin Pines Mall. But I wasn't awake long enough to see the DeLorean rev up to 88 mph. And once in my trancelike state, I no longer feared I might possibly be tickled.



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